

Th. Sect.

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy on

STRATEGY AND TACTICS IN MEDIAEVAL SCOTLAND,

by

J.D.FORBES.

(Degree conferred by Edinburgh University--1-7-1927).

This revised copy to be lodged in the
University Library.

*Thesis for the degree of Ph.D.
Degree conferred 1st August, 1927.*



Contents.

Part I. The Northern Counties; the Norsemen.	Page.
Chapter I. The Standard.	1.
" II. The Campaigns of William the Lion.	11.
" III. The Invasion of Haco.	22.
Part II. The War of Independence.	
Chapter I. Berwick and Dunbar.	32.
" II. Wallace and Stirling Bridge.	42.
" III. Falkirk.	53.
" IV. Minor Operations.	63.
" V. Methven Wood and Loudon Hill.	72.
" VI. Scottish Sieges.	81.
" VII. Bannockburn.	90.
" VIII. Border Warfare.	103.
" IX. Dupplin Moor.	116.
" X. Halidon Hill.	124.
" XI. Guerilla Warfare.	133.
Part III. The French Alliance.	
Chapter I. Neville's Cross and Otterburn.	143.
" II. The Army of the Stuarts.	153.
" III. James IV and Seapower.	162.
" IV. Flodden Field.	171.
" V. Summary and Conclusion.	180.
Bibliography.	189.

Part I. The Northern Counties; the Norsemen.

Chapter I.

The Standard.

Section 1. Preliminary operations.

No army representative of the kingdom of Scotland as a whole marched to war before the days of David I. The struggles of Nectansmere and Carham, decisive as they were, were part of the consolidation of the country, while the fights of Malcolm Canmore were border raids of a type well known in later days. David's army was the first which could be said to stand for all Scotland and to show the methods of fighting employed by the Scots of the twelfth century.

The causes of the campaign of 1138 were simple. The northern counties were, during that period, a constant bone of contention between the two countries, and David, like many of his predecessors and successors, was eager to secure them for Scotland. The civil war raging in England between the partisans of Stephen and those of Matilda seemed likely to prevent any effective opposition to a Scottish attack, while David's close relationship to one of the contending parties provided him with a sufficient pretext for intervention in the struggle.

The trouble started very soon after the death of Henry I of England. In December, 1135, and January, 1136, David made a sudden attack on the north of England and seized the towns of Wark, Alnwick, Carlisle, Norham, and Newcastle. He failed to gain Bamburgh and was prevented from besieging Durham by the arrival of Stephen with a strong force. A prolonged parley ensued and a peace was patched up on Stephen investing Prince Henry, son of David, with the earldoms of Huntingdon and Carlisle.!

Carlisle./

In 1137, Stephen being overseas in Normandy, David again prepared to attack, but on this occasion the threat was promptly met by the formation of an English force at Newcastle. This force, which was apparently large enough to deter David from his intended invasion, seems to have included a number of barons and knights from the southern parts of England, who had gone north at the request of Stephen. Thurstan, archbishop of York, negotiated a truce with the Scots, which was to last till the return of Stephen from Normandy. On his return, a request by David that Northumberland be given to Prince Henry was rejected; as a consequence the somewhat shadowy truce was broken off and a state of open warfare prevailed./

Early in January, 1138, David's nephew, William, attempted to surprise Wark castle by a night attack, but was repulsed. David and Henry joined the attacking force and for a period of three weeks attempts were made to capture the castle, siege engines being used in the assault.² The garrison, commanded by Jordan de Bussy, nephew of Walter l'Espec, held out in stubborn fashion, and all the attacks of the Scots were repulsed with loss, David's standard-bearer being among the slain.³ Thus early it is apparent that the Scots were by no means adept in regular siege operations, a branch of warfare in which they never greatly distinguished themselves. The Scots, disappointed in the event of the siege, spread over the north, plundering and burning, and laid waste the country as far as Corbridge; a massacre took place at Tanfield.⁴

1. Richard of Hexham, fo. 40; John of Hexham, par. 4.

2. Ballistas are mentioned by Richard of Hexham, fo. 40b.

3. John of Hexham, par. 4.

4. John of Hexham, par. 4. It is as well to state here, once and for all, that the atrocities repeatedly alleged by English chroniclers are probably exaggerations; but even the bare truth of a border raid must have been bad enough.

Tanfield./

On the approach of Stephen with a force of barons and men-at-arms, the Scots retreated over the ⁿborder and took post in the difficult land in the vicinity of Roxburgh,¹ ready to fall on Stephen, if he should act carelessly. Here first appears the familiar Scottish strategy of avoiding a pitched battle with a better-equipped army in favour of a policy of attrition by ambushes and surprises. It is improbable that David had a large force with him at that time. After a successful raid there would naturally be a diminution in numbers caused by the departure of men intent upon securing their plunder. In this respect it must be remembered that not a tenth part of David's force was amenable to any form of discipline, in the modern sense of the word. In any case David could not have kept together his whole force from January to August, when the battle itself was fought.

Stephen remained some time in the south of Scotland and did some damage to the border districts, but retired in the second half of February, probably because of lack of food and the absence of any enemy with whom he might fight.² David had now a period of quiet in which he could plan a serious invasion of the northern counties, for he had certain knowledge that Stephen would be kept busy in the south by the supporters of Matilda. Attention must now be turned to the forces with which the main attack of 1138 was made.

¹ Familiarly known as the forests of Jedworth.

² Richard of Hexham, fo.41b. John of Hexham, par.4, alleges that there was some treachery among the notables of Stephen's camp and that Stephen discovered this. If the dishonest policy of supporting the highest bidder, adopted by most of the English barons of this period, is any indication, the allegation is probably true.

Section 2. Composition and equipment of the Scottish army.

The heavily armed portion of David's army was made up of the barons and knights of English and Norman families who had settled in Scotland, either after the Norman conquest of England or at the invitation of David himself, with their men-at-arms. This body would not be a very large one. The Normanisation theory, as far as Scotland is concerned, has probably been overdone,¹ and the number of settlers of that race in Scotland could not have been very large. As a proof of the smallness of this force we have the statement in Aelred of Rievaulx that Prince Henry, who commanded the division containing most of the mounted men, had only a force of two hundred in his charge on the English line. The equipment of this body would be similar to that of the knights on the English side, that is defensive armour consisting of the conical helmet with nasal, the quilted hauberk or shirt with overlapping scales of armour and a pectoral to protect the neck and shoulders, the Norman kite shield, somewhat shortened since the time of Hastings, and some protection for the front of the legs secured by lacing. Chain mail, a very expensive item at any time, was not yet widely introduced. For offensive purposes the cavalry carried lances, swords, and in some cases maces. The horses were heavily built and clumsy, with the result that the cavalry charge of the period probably never exceeded in speed a smart trot or canter.

The levies of the eastern Lowlands would to some extent resemble the English fyrd. Some slight discipline would exist, but not by any means enough to make the men an organised body of footmen. The arms consisted of shield, wooden, leather, or metal-studded, and a pike or sword; a certain number had bows of short or Norman type, not so effective as the longbow, which, as the result of contact with the Welsh, was beginning to come into use among the English at this time. The guisarme or bill, which appeared in warfare at this period, never became popular in Scotland.

¹ See E.M. Barron's Scottish War of Independence.

Scotland./

The great bulk of David's host was composed of the wild clansmen of Galloway and the Highlands, fighting under their own chiefs, and armed only with target, dart, and sword. They were brought into the field by their local chiefs on the summons of the king, and were, of course, quite undisciplined, being probably more concerned in acquiring plunder than in the result of the campaign. Such a body of men would be very useful in a pursuit or in skirmishing warfare, but, in a pitched battle with a better equipped force, its value was small; nor could it be held together for any length of time.

The Scottish host could not have fallen far short of twenty thousand men./ In the absence of any organised commissariat, a body so large was bound to feed on the country as it progressed, and concentration could only be possible for a day or two at a time. There is no trace of any organisation intended to weld the whole into a fighting instrument of value. For a raid David's force was too large; for a regular conquest of the north the dependable portion of his army was too small.

Section 3. The battle.

In April David again marched south and resumed his devastation of the land. He laid siege to Norham, which, through lack of help from its lord, the bishop of Durham, was compelled to surrender and was destroyed. While the siege was progressing, David's nephew, William, had been sent south with an irregular force and, possibly, a few knights², and had routed a body of English at Clitheroe on ⁹th June.³

1. The usual number, given by the chroniclers and accepted by Professor Oman, is ^wtwenty-six thousand.

2. Richard of Hexham, fo. 41b. "cum Pictis et parte exercitus sui."

3. John of Hexham, par. 5.

During the siege David's communications had been harassed by the garrison of Wark, and, as a result, he made another attack on that stronghold; this attempt was a failure, and David, leaving the siege to two of his thegns, advanced south, destroying Bamburgh as he passed. He was joined by an adherent of Stephen, Eustace FitzJohn, who offered to surrender his castle at Malton. It was probably this tempting proposition that drew David so far south.¹

As Yorkshire was now in danger, the barons of the county met at York to arrange measures of defence. Some seem to have wavered in their allegiance to Stephen, but the exhortations of ^{Thurstan}~~Stephen~~, the archbishop of York, and the opportune arrival of Bernard de Baliol from the south, with a force of cavalry sent by Stephen, brought about a determination to fight.² The barons and their retainers, together with the fyrd of the York district, advanced as far as Thirsk, thirteen miles south of Northallerton, and from that place sent Baliol and Robert de Bruce to request David to desist from his ravaging in return for the gift of the earldom of Northumberland to ~~his friend~~ Prince Henry. David refused the offer and proceeded to cross the Tees, probably in the neighbourhood where Darlington now stands. Hearing of this, the Yorkshiremen, reinforced by a body from Nottinghamshire under William Peverel and one from Derbyshire under Robert de Ferrers, advanced past Northallerton, and took post about three miles to the north to await the arrival of the Scots.³ The position on Cowton or Wiske⁴moor gave a very slight advantage by the slope of the ground, but the effect was negligible in the battle.

The English, heavily outnumbered, but probably

¹Richard of Hexham, fo.42. ²Ibidem, fo.42b.

³Ibidem, fo.43.

⁴Roger of Hoveden, p.193, has "in Cutune mor"; but the position is practically a mile to the east of the village of Danby Wiske.

probably/

superior in cavalry, formed the fyrd into a single body facing the Scots advance, and stiffened the ranks by the introduction of dismounted knights and men-at-arms. Thus the Scots were confronted by a line of mingled pikemen and archers, backed up by the heavily armed men. The remainder of the English barons grouped themselves round the Standard to direct the battle and to form a rallying-point for the host./ The most notable among them were William de Albemarle, Walter de Gant, Bruce, Baliol, Walter l'Espece, Richard de Courcy, Robert d'Estuteville, Peverel, and Ferrers. They made no attempt to use their superiority in cavalry, probably because they felt that the fyrd must be directly supported.

David at first intended to attack the English with one dense column, which would have dismounted knights and the archers as its spearhead. He realised that the English line would not be easily broken by the half-naked Galloway men and the Highlanders. But his proposal roused into activity the dormant jealousy, dating from the time of Malcolm Canmore, which existed between the Teutonic and Celtic elements in his army. A fierce quarrel broke out between the Celtic chief, Malise, earl of Strathearn, and the Norman, Alan de Percy, and David, fearing a breakup of his army, consented to a new arrangement.² This consisted in dividing the army into four sections. The Galloway men formed an advanced centre, while two slightly withdrawn wings were formed, by the Lowlanders on the left, and Prince Henry, with the Teviotdale men and the bulk of the knights on the right. David himself, with the Highlanders and the men of Moray, and with certain dismounted knights, formed a reserve.³ It is probable that David intended all three divisions of the front line to attack simultaneously, and that it was the reckless courage of the Galwegians that carried

/Aelred of Rievaulx, fo.199.²Ibidem, fo.198b.

³Ibidem, fo.199.

8.
carried/

them in advance of the two wings.

With a yell of "Albanach" the men of Galloway hurled themselves on the English and breached the front lines of the fyrd.¹ But the gap was quickly closed by the knights and the Scots recoiled, losing many men under the constant shower of arrows. A second and a third time they returned, wounded and whole, to the attack, but at length, dispirited by their lack of success and by the loss of their chiefs, they broke up and fled.² Meanwhile the Lowlanders on the left had lost their chief by an arrow shot and the division melted away with hardly an effort.³ On the right Prince Henry by a gallant charge with his mounted men opened a way for his Teviotdale infantry through the ranks of the fyrd; but his footmen were slow in coming up and the gap was closed by the English before further damage could be done. Henry and his knights were left on the wrong side of the English line, while David advanced with his reserve in a last effort to gain the day; but the king's followers slipped away from him and he was finally dissuaded from attacking by his attendant knights and chiefs. The Scots drew off the field, but rallied a short distance away and effectually prevented any successful pursuit. There was no semblance of a rout, but a certain number of stragglers were cut off in the retreat. Prince Henry and his mounted men mostly escaped by working through the English ranks under pretence of being part of the English army.⁴ David was still strong enough to besiege and capture Wark on his way north.

The Scottish losses would naturally be much greater than those of the English, and several knights were taken

1. Henry of Huntingdon, par. 9. 2. Aelred of Rievaulx, fo. 199B.

3. Henry of Huntingdon, par. 9.

4. They would have been distinguished by being mounted, but probably many of the English knights had remounted in order to pursue.

taken/

prisoners. On the English side some of the fyrd were slain, together with one knight, the brother of Ilbert de Lacy./

Section 4. Conclusions.

Apparently the Scots had no regular plan, either for the campaign or for the battle. David appears, not as a general with regular aims, but as an opportunist, ready to turn in whatever direction should be most suitable at the moment. It is very doubtful if he should have crossed the Tees at all. By doing so he passed into territory which he could not hope to hold, and roused a spirit of resistance, which did not appear so long as he was content to occupy the north. An additional proof of his incapacity is the manner in which he left Wark castle untaken, with a garrison able to upset his communications. He does not seem to have taken any effective measures to mask the fortress until a successful raid had been made on his transport.

In the battle itself the Scots army made no attempt to manoeuvre. Although deficient in cavalry, David's force, thanks to the presence of the light-footed Galwegians and Highlanders, was much more mobile than the English fyrd. The Yorkshire barons had drawn up their force in a formation which made rapid manoeuvring impossible.² Both English flanks were absolutely in the air. If David, using his superior numbers, had combined a holding attack in front with a flanking movement of his light troops, the position of the English would have been very serious. At the best their whole line might have been rolled up, and at the worst a flank attack would have been far less exposed to the English archery.

Even David's first plan of an attack by a single

1. Henry of Huntingdon, par. 9.

2. They were probably driven to this to support the morale of their footmen, who seem to have been very shaky at the start of the battle

single/

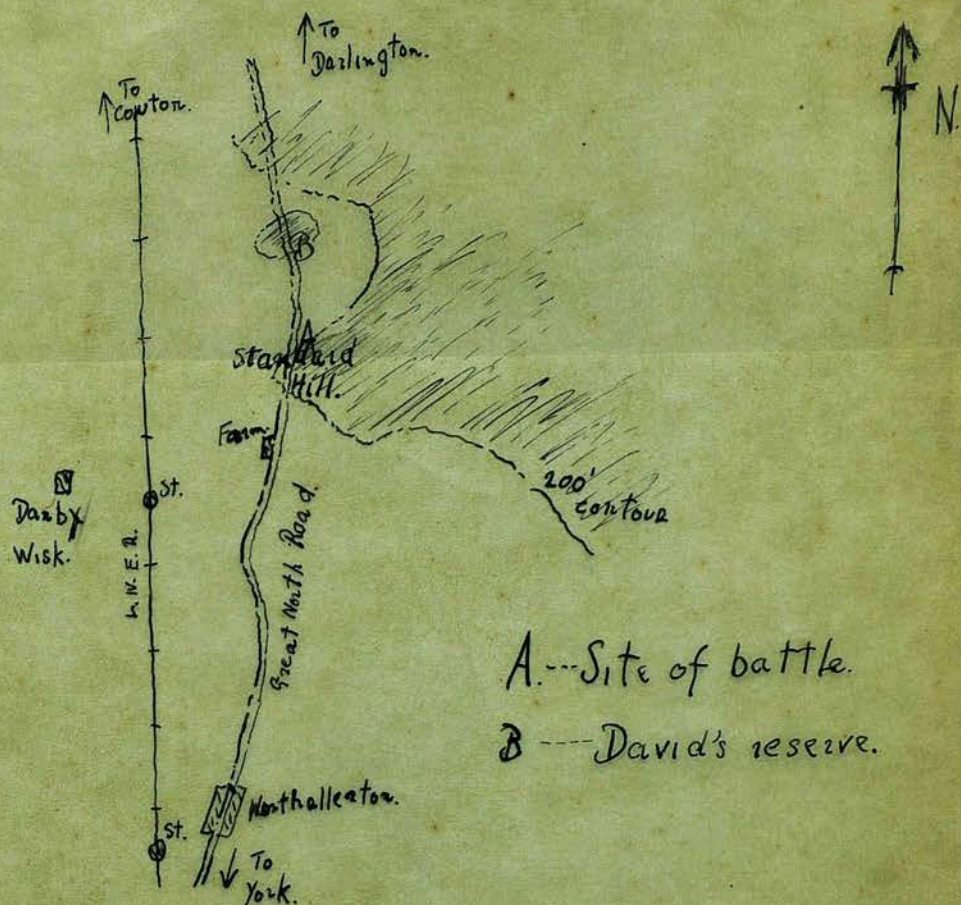
massed column was preferable to the scheme finally adopted. The column might have shared the fate of Mar's attack at Dupplin Moor, but, taking into consideration the fact that the English archery had not reached a very high state of development in 1138, it might, by sheer weight of numbers, have smashed through the English line. As matters actually were, David anticipated the error of Napoleon at Waterloo and, by throwing his men at the English line in detachments, allowed the English, though inferior in numbers over the whole, to meet each attack with a superiority at the critical point.

The truth is that the tail wagged the dog. There was deep racial jealousy and a lack of the most elementary discipline in the Scottish army, while the king himself wavered at the critical moment. As a result the part of the army which had the least fighting value was allowed to dictate the policy of the mass. /

The picture is, as a whole, a depressing one. The Scots were still at a primitive stage in the organisation of warfare. With advantages in numbers and mobility, buoyed up by previous successes, and favoured by the error of their opponents in taking up an exposed position, they ignominiously failed in the battle itself; nor could the failure be attributed to lack of courage or resolution. It is clear that outside the limited body of knights and men-at-arms, there was no force on which reliance could be put and that the Scottish people had everything to learn in the art of scientific warfare as distinguished from mere random melees.

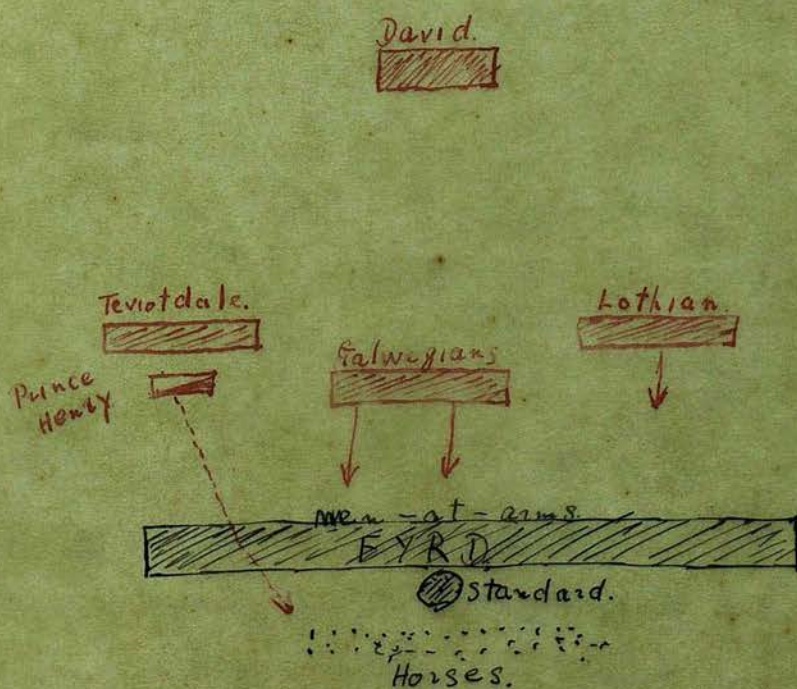
/ This does not mean that the Galwegians were not good fighters. In a different type of action their value would probably have been greater than that of the rest of the army.

Sketch Map of Northallerton District.



Scale about $\frac{1}{2}$ to mile.

Battle of the Standard.



English in black.
Scots in red.

Chapter II.

The Campaigns of William the Lion.

Section 1. The invasion of 1173.

In that year, Henry II being engaged overseas in France, William judged the occasion a suitable one for a further attempt to secure the northern counties for Scotland. The army, which assembled at Caldenlea in Selkirkshire, probably did not differ much in composition and equipment from that led by David forty years earlier. That it was a national force and that it contained a large proportion of the wild irregulars, who figured so prominently in the battle of the Standard, is shown by the presence of contingents from the districts of Ross and Moray, and by the reference to many of the Scots as "naked men" made by the chronicler of the campaign.¹ There were present of the notable men of Scotland, Gilibrede, earl of Angus, and Colban, earl of Fife.

What the numbers were is, as usual, difficult to ascertain. Fantosme gives a total of forty thousand men, but that is certainly an exaggeration. Possibly the army, raised under similar circumstances and by similar means to that of David, was not very different from his in point of size. The estimate of the knights and men-at-arms as totalling one thousand is probably pretty near the mark, as the number of such in Scotland would naturally have increased since the time of the Standard. The arms of the heavy cavalry, offensive and defensive, had made little progress, though chain mail was becoming a little more widely used in Europe generally at this time. Otherwise there was little change; the seal of William shows, on the reverse, the king wearing the pointed helmet and nasal, which had been introduced by the Normans; he also carries shield and lance.²

¹ Jordan Fantosme, 1.460. ² Bain's Documents, I.105.

On crossing the border William's first move was to attack the castle of Wark, which, from its position, constituted a threat to all invading forces. The governor, Roger d'Estuteville, doubtful of his ability to hold out against so large a force, obtained from William a truce for forty days in order that he might communicate with Henry. William, having thus, rather astutely, got rid of all danger to his rear for a lengthy period, pressed his advance south. He seems to have contemplated an attack on Newcastle, but abandoned the idea because of his lack of siege engines. Carlisle was, however, besieged by the Scots, but the governor, Robert de Vaus, was able to repulse the attack. The usual ravaging had, of course, been going on throughout the invasion.

A relieving English force under the command of the Justiciar, Richard de Lucy, and the Constable, Humphrey de Bohun, was now advancing north, and William, just as David had done under similar circumstances, abandoned his attack and retreated into the Roxburgh district, the wild nature of that region affording a secure refuge to the Scots. The English forces crossed the Tweed in October and proceeded to lay waste part of Lothian, but their progress was checked by news from the south that the insurgent earl of Leicester had landed in England. Faced with the necessity of a hurried withdrawal, de Lucy obtained William's consent to a truce which would last till the following summer. /

Section 2. The invasion of 1174.

In April David again crossed the border and renewed the attack on Wark castle, while the light troops scoured the country in the vicinity of Belford. In the siege William employed Flemings, probably mercenaries, a sufficient commentary on the ability of the Scots to conduct sieges successfully. The Flemings pierced the chevaulx-de-frise and

/Jordan Fantosme; William of Newburgh, II.Ch.30; Roger of Howeden, II.54.

and/

actually reached the ditch of the castle, but were unable to penetrate further and fell back after suffering heavily. An arbalest was brought up to help the attackers, but this expedient proved unavailing. Finally, when an attempt to burn the castle had also failed, the siege was abandoned and William retreated, after burning his hut encampment.¹

The Scots next proceeded towards Carlisle, William being apparently ^{advised} to adopt this course by his immediate attendants Roger de Mowbray, ^{Adam} ~~Walter~~ de Port, and Walter de Berkeley. The town was summoned, but de Vaus refused to capitulate. No attempt was made at a storm, but a detachment of the Scottish army established a blockade of the place.² While this blockade was slowly taking effect, William turned to Appleby, which surrendered without resistance. Brough, a tower protected by a stockade, both probably of wood, was next taken by the use of fire.³ The castles of Liddel; Warkworth, and Harbottle also fell into the hands of the Scots at the same time.⁴ Robert de Vaus was now seriously alarmed at the successes of the enemy and the pressure of the blockade and agreed to surrender Carlisle, if help did not come from Henry within a fixed period.

Having thus cleared his rear William attacked Prudhoe, a fortress belonging to Odinel de Umfraville, but gave up the attempt at the end of three days.⁵ This attack at ^{last} aroused the English of the north and de Umfraville busied himself in securing help in Yorkshire. He received promises of assistance from William d'Estuteville, Ranulph de Glanville,

¹Jordan Fantosme, lines 1150s.

²Roger of Hoveden, II.60.

³Jordan Fantosme.

⁴Roger of Hoveden, II.60.

⁵He seems, however, to have done some damage to the fort; see Bain, I.130.

Glanville, /

William de Vesci, and Bernard de Baliol. Sixty knights were contributed to the force by the archbishop of York, and the total reached the number of four hundred heavy cavalry. /.

Meanwhile William, hearing that a force was being formed in Yorkshire, crossed the Tyne into the county of Northumberland, and settled down to the blockade of Alnwick with his knights, while the light troops roamed far and wide, plundering the country in merciless fashion². These raiders seem to have been divided into two sections, one under Duncan, earl of Fife, and the other under Richard de Moreville, the constable of Scotland.

The English force came north by forced marches, un^caccompanied by footmen. On 12th July they reached Newcastle and there a council was held to settle what action should be taken. The barons were now aware that Prudhoe was safe and that the immediate danger to Yorkshire had vanished.³ For some It seemed the height of rashness to march against William with his infinitely larger force. Eventually the arguments of the bolder element carried the day and it was determined to advance. Through the night and in the early dawn the march northwards was carried on and the English approached Alnwick in the forenoon of the 13th. During the last stages of the journey a dense mist is said to have prevailed⁴ and this may explain how the English were able to pass through the Scottish outposts⁵ without the alarm being given. Some of the party were eager to turn back, but Baliol heartened them by his resolution. Close to the river the English came upon William himself with a small body of sixty cavalry in

1. Jordan Fantosme.

2. Wyntoun, ch. 8.

3. Jordan Fantosme.

4. William of Newburgh, ch. 35.

5. If there were any.

in/

a meadow./.

Apparently William at first imagined that the advancing force was part of his own army, but a closer scrutiny showed the presence of English standards. The obvious course for the king was to retreat until he could gather sufficient of his forces to overwhelm the English, but instead of doing this he adopted the foolish course of charging the enemy.² He struck down his first opponent, but a sergeant killed his horse, and William was pinned to the ground by its dead body. Unable to make any further resistance~~x~~ he surrendered to Ranulph de Glanville. Baliol stunned and captured William de Mortimer, and many of the Scots, including Richard Comyn, surrendered when they saw the king taken. Roger de Mowbray and Adam de Port succeeded in making their escape and returned to Scotland. The losses on both sides were naturally small, as the whole affair was little more than a skirmish. The captive king was taken to Richmond castle in Yorkshire.³

Section 3. Conclusions.

The main interest of the two campaigns, which have been briefly described above, lies, not in the actual shock of battle of which there was little, but in William's movements and in the behaviour of his men. These are important

1. What exactly happened at this point is uncertain. William of Newburgh, ch.33, asserts that the mist suddenly rose and the English found themselves close to William. Fantosme, on the other hand, states that the English took post in a wood, and that a spy, sent forward by de Glanville, returned and reported William's exposed situation. The latter explanation seems to me the more probable.

2. It was, however, a regular piece of mediaeval bravado. The Conduct of Clifford and Argentine at Bannockburn was similar.

3. Jordan Fantosme; William of Newburgh, ch.33; Roger of Hoveden, II.63.

important/

because they form part of what was really the last attempt at conquest by the Scots, as distinct from invasions in defence of their own territory.

There is in William's movements the same lack of a definite plan of conquest, which was noticeable in David's invasion of 1138; but, with the exception of the catastrophe at Alnwick which terminated the campaign and nullified all its previous successes, there are traces of some skill in the operations of the king and his advisers. In this respect it must be remembered that although with William, as commander-in-chief, lay the final responsibility, yet most of the actions of the war were probably directed by Adam de Port and the other barons who were in immediate attendance on the king. There is no trace of any say being allowed to what may be called the irregular element in the Scots army, and we may surmise that if a pitched battle had been fought with the English, it would have been managed on more regular lines than that of the Standard.

When the army proved unable to take Wark castle, the invasion, instead of being pushed south as David's had been, was directed westwards, and an attempt was made to open a way to Scotland by the capture of Carlisle and the neighbouring fortresses. This attempt was in the main successful and the Scots secured communication with their own country in the west. It is difficult to rate as equally sound the move from Prudhoe to Alnwick. It is true that William had only heard that a force was gathering against him in the south and could not possibly know how weak that force was. Under these circumstances it was perhaps justifiable on his part to seek to avoid a battle and secure his retreat; but he does not seem to have considered that by retreating he sacrificed his chance of obtaining possession of Carlisle. In addition it may be pointed out that, unless the Scots were capable of winning a battle against the English forces of the north, they could

could/

never hope to hold the northern counties, and thus the whole invasion would be stultified. The fact seems to be that neither William nor David had the idea of a complete conquest, but that both thought that by making intolerable nuisances of themselves they might induce the English rulers of their respective periods to hand over the north. In David's case this plan was partially successful, but its success could only endure so long as the English were too weak to take back the lands they had surrendered.

The actual occurrences round Alnwick itself are shrouded in mystery. William had presumably between ten and twenty thousand men occupying the country round about. Yet a body of heavy cavalry, too large to be easily concealed, was able to blunder through the ring of besiegers and capture the king, and also, which is much more surprising, was able to withdraw again with its prisoners, without, so far as can be ascertained, any serious attempt being made at a rescue.

It can safely be assumed that the Scots had no effective outpost system in operation. Even the lightest screen of pickets could not have failed to notice the passage of four hundred horsemen, even if that passage took place in dim light. The point that cannot be settled is whether the absence of outposts was due to carelessness in the high command or to lack of discipline on the part of the troops. William and his knights knew that a force had been embodied against them, but of its whereabouts they were unaware; from their point of view it was much more likely to be near Prudhoe than near Alnwick. The theory that the Scots despised the English force because of its smallness and therefore took no precautions against it is negatived by the fact that they had already retreated from Prudhoe because of its rumoured approach. Any information as to size gained during the retreat or during the siege of Alnwick would have disclosed the position of the English and would have put the Scots on their guard.

On the other hand it may be said that William's army was living on the country and was therefore scattered over a wide area. A great deal of plundering was going on and it would be very difficult to find among the light troops a sufficient number of reliable men, who could be trusted to undertake steady outpost duty while their fellows were busily engaged in looting the country for their own profit. This fact makes it probable that some sort of an outpost line was posted and that the men either slipped away to plunder or were so lax in their attention to duty that the English force was allowed to pass through. The absence of any attempt at a rescue may be explained by the facts that the reliable part of the army was dispersed by the English cavalry and that the remainder, scattered and without leaders, would naturally think the attack only a prelude to an offensive by a much larger force.

In summing up the points of the campaign it may be said that in the conduct of the invasions and especially in the sieges of the castles there are signs of an advance in skill. But it is clear that there was still no regular force able to undertake a definite campaign as distinct from a raid, and that the advance in the science of warfare was due to the alien influences, Norman and Fleming, in the Scottish army.

Section 4. Siege weapons./

From classical times down to the age of the invention and development of gunpowder, the main weapons in use in sieges varied very little. Demetrius Poliorcetes knew as much about the scientific methods of taking a fortress as the Scottish leaders of the Middle Ages, and it is not till the siege of Roxburgh castle by James II, that any marked

/As reference has been made in this chapter and will have to be made in others to certain implements of siege warfare, I have considered it advisable to insert here a short section, explaining briefly the nature of these weapons. The list has no pretensions to being exhaustive.

marked/

development of these methods takes place in Scottish affairs.

In dealing with a castle the mediaeval general, if time was no object, resorted to a blockade or made one of those, to us, curious arrangements with the besieged by which no hostilities took place and the fortress surrendered after a fixed period, if no relief arrived in the interval. If a regular attack in form was to be made, the first object was to reach the moat or ditch. To do this it was usually necessary to storm the *tete-de-pont* of the drawbridge, which otherwise might be used by the garrison as a sally-port from which a sortie might be made to take the besiegers in the flank. The ditch was frequently defended by *chevaux-de-frise*, or entanglements in modern terms, and these had to be pierced under the archery fire of the besieged.

The ditch, being reached, was next filled up for some distance in order to give the attackers access to the foot of the walls. This was an expensive operation, as the besiegers were by this time exposed to the shower of heavy stones, boiling pitch and water, arrows, and other projectiles used by the defenders. To protect the men at the ditch the archers of the besiegers were usually employed to give a covering fire and to clear the top of the wall as much as possible.

When a way had been opened to the wall, several expedients were open to the attacking general, which he might use simultaneously or separately. a. An attack by scaling-ladders might be made at several points. This was an uncertain and most suitable in a surprise. b. The place might be bombarded by the large siege engines, all worked by the

method

1. We are dealing here with a stone castle, but it must be remembered that till the 14th century there were few such in Scotland. Most of the strongholds were constructed largely of wood, and were correspondingly easy to take.
2. Various known under a bewildering diversity of names such as the catapult, ballista, mangonel, sling, arbalest (not the small variety, or crossbow), etc.

the/

principles of stretching or twisting ropes, or by counterpoise. These machines were of more use in annoying the besieged than in making a regular breach. c. The ram might be brought forward to batter down the wall. It was usually protected by a penthouse, or sow, which moved on wheels and was constructed of timber and raw hides, the latter being used to minimise the danger of fire from the combustibles dropped upon it by the garrison. d. The cat could be used; it was a bore intended to loosen the stones of the wall and so make a hole, and was, like the ram, protected by a penthouse. e. Miners might be set to work to dig under the wall. The roof of the mine was propped up by beams, which were set on fire after the men had withdrawn. When the timbers had been consumed, the mine fell in and the wall collapsed. f. A tower could be constructed of timber and mounted on wheels. It was made so that, when it was rolled up to the wall, its top would be level with the parapet and the attackers could thus jump on to the top of the wall and clear it of defenders. The tower was, however, useless if the ground was uneven or soft, and was very liable to be destroyed by fire. g. An attempt might be made to burn down the gate, but as this was usually protected by a portcullis and flanking towers, and was often set in a tunnel, such an attempt was very costly and uncertain.

Almost any one of the above methods could be successfully employed by a strong force against a second-rate fortress, as were most of the castles in Scotland, but it is evident that a first-class castle, ably governed, and equipped with two or three lines of defence and a keep, could defy its attackers for a prolonged period.

In defence the main object was to destroy the engines of the besiegers. This could be done by sorties, fire, projectiles, cutting the ropes of the engines, jamming the head of the ram, and by counter-mining. The machines used for purposes of bombardment were similar to those of the attackers.

attackers.✓

In addition the wall might be heightened at a threatened point or a half-moon wall built to cover any breach which had been made. In the best type of castle the battlements projected, and there were slits in the floor, which enabled the defenders to drop stones or liquid to the foot of the wall without exposing themselves above the parapet.

Blarney castle, though not a mediaeval fortress, has good examples of this means of defence. The most accurate and graphic account of the type of siege prevalent in ancient and mediaeval times is that in Flaubert's "Salambo" .

Chapter III.

The Invasion of Haco.

Section 1. Previous troubles.

After the catastrophe at Alnwick the Scots gave up the attempt to secure the northern counties and a state of peace prevailed between the two countries for more than a century. This period of harmony was invaluable to the Scottish kings, who were actively engaged in consolidating their kingdom and in subjugating the more unruly sections of the people in Galloway and Argyle, but, being a period of peace, it was necessarily unaccompanied by any military development. The consolidation of the country naturally entailed attempts to secure the western isles, and these attempts brought about troubles with the Norsemen in whose possession they then were.

The first serious disturbance took place in 1228. Being at so great a distance from Norway, the Islesmen enjoyed a kind of semi-independence under the rule of king's lieutenant or viceroy, that post being held at the time by Olaf of Man. But the greatest power in the southern islands seems to have been held by the house of ~~S~~^Somerled. In 1228 Alan of Galloway, whether acting on his own initiative or by direction of superior authority, attacked the southern isles and Olaf was unable to resist him successfully. Ospak, of the house of Somerled, brought the news of the disaster to Haco, and was soon followed by the defeated Olaf. Two years later Haco named Ospak ruler of the Isles and sent him off from Bergen with Olaf and eleven ships to reconquer the islanders, who seem to have made common cause with their Scottish invaders.¹

By recruiting in the Orkneys and in the western isles the attacking force was raised to a total of eighty

¹ The Haco Saga, Rolls Series, p.163.

2. " , p.164.

eighty/

ships.¹ The Norsemen sailed round Cantyre and landed on Bute to attack the Scottish strongholds there. An assault was made on one of the castles, which was constructed, at least partially, of stone, but the attackers were driven back by the showers of boiling pitch and lead poured upon them by the defenders. They next constructed wooden shelters² and, under cover of these, hewed their way through the foot of the wall, which was constructed of soft stone. A covering fire of archery was kept up, which caused the garrison some loss. After three days' siege the castle was taken and plundered, but it had cost the Norsemen, on their own confession, three hundred men, a serious loss to their small force. This was aggravated shortly afterwards by the bursting of a storm, which caused the loss of three ships³ with their crews. Threatened with an attack by Alan of Galloway with a superior force, the invaders lay in shelter off the Cantyre coast. Here Ospak died and Olaf, who succeeded to the leadership, sailed to Man, where the winter was spent.

In the following spring the force, leaving Olaf in Man, attacked Cantyre. The Norsemen built a camp on the shore and marched inland, where a fight took place. After an indecisive struggle in which both sides suffered heavily, the Norsemen retreated to their camp which had been plundered in their absence. After some other small raids had been made on various points of the Cantyre peninsula, the force returned to ~~Orkney~~^{Norway} by Lewis and the Orkneys.³

It is clear that the attack had made no great impression, a fact due no doubt to the smallness of the force,^x the distance from its base, and the difficulty of securing

¹ About forty men to a ship may be a fair average; see Du Chaillu on the subject.

² I presume this to be the meaning of the "flakes" mentioned in the Saga, p.167.

³ Haco Saga, pp.167s.

securing/

reinforcements. A Norse landing was the sign for the people of the neighbouring districts to take arms en masse, and this rude form of levy was sufficiently strong to prevent any penetration inland on the part of the invaders. We are free to assume that after the withdrawal of the attackers Cantyre, Arran, the Cumbraes, and Bute, at least, remained in the power of the Scots.

For over thirty years matters remained as they were, the only serious movement being the attempt of Alexander II in 1248 to secure the isles. This failed owing to the loyalty of John of Man to the Norse cause and to the death of the king at Kerrera. There followed the minority of Alexander III, during which little could be done by the Scots, but in 1262 the earl of Ross, presumably acting with Alexander's encouragement, attacked and ravaged Skye. The news of this raid and the rumour that Alexander was planning a conquest of the isles stirred Haco to action and he ordered the preparation of an expeditionary force.²

Section 2. The main attack.

In the spring of 1263 Haco was ready to sail with the greatest force that had ever left Norway,³ His own ship,

¹ Haco Saga, p. 265. ² Ibidem, p. 314.

³ The Raven Song; "Never gold hater

Saw more on one spot

Sturdy spear-throwers

To stand by their lord.

That fountain of honour

Shut out the sea-shore

With shield-fence of ships,

And an army of men"

Were some of the vessels English ships? Wyntoun, ch. x, mentions that some of the vessels had top-castles, surely unusual in a Norse galley. Bain, I, 2355, has a protest of Henry III at some English vessels, presumably merchant ships, being seized by the Norsemen and used in the war against Scotland.

ship, /

the largest of the fleet, was splendidly equipped and had ~~xxix~~ thirty benches, which allowing two men to a bench and certain supernumeraries, supposes a crew of at least ninety men. /

The expedition sailed rapidly to Shetland, where a delay of a fortnight took place in Bressay Sound, and thence to Kirkwall, where a council was held. Haco, apparently realising the hopelessness of a struggle in the west far from his base, proposed that he should keep his fleet at Kirkwall, while a portion of the force should bring pressure on the Scots by ravaging the fertile district of Moray. This plan failed through the reluctance of the Norsemen to being detached from the king and the main force, a reluctance which seems to imply, even at this early stage, a lack of confidence in their own strength. Invaluable time had been wasted and it was the 5th of August before Haco proceeded by Ronaldshay, the Pentland Firth, Lewis, and the Sounds of Skye and Mull, to Kerrera in the bay of Oban, where the whole force mustered, one hundred and twenty ships strong.² At a liberal estimate of fifty men to a ship, this gives a total of no more than six thousand men.

From Kerrera Haco proceeded south to Gigha, almost half the force being detached to harry Tarbet in Cantyre. The ravaging went on till the local chiefs submitted, and the king, after a further delay due to waiting for a wind, rounded the Mull and anchored at Lamlash, while a small force took possession of Bute with very little trouble.³ Alexander, well knowing that the islands and Cantyre were merely pawns bound to become the spoil of the ultimate victor and that the weather would prove his best ally, did not trouble unduly about the loss of the outlying districts, but contented himself with holding his main force at Ayr as a central point and relying

/Haco Saga, p.318.

2. " , p.319.

3. " , pp.320-322.

on the people of the coast to resist any landing long enough to enable him to come up. At the same time he kept up a desultory negotiation with Haco by which time was passed away. His confidence in the outcome of the struggle is shown by his absolute refusal to surrender to the Norsemen the islands of Arran, Bute, and the Cumbraes.²

At length Haco, weary of this fruitless bargaining and conscious that September was well advanced and that his men were short of food, sailed to the Cumbraes, where the temporary truce was broken off. Sixty ships, being half the Norse fleet, were detached under Magnus of Man to Loch Long.³ From the loch the Norsemen performed a portage of their small boats into Loch Lomond, whence raiding parties desolated the islands of the loch and the rich district of Lennox, one body pushing well into the interior of the country. The raid was distinctly successful, but this was largely discounted by

There is little direct evidence that Ayr itself was Alexander's base, but it was the most central point for the defence of the seaboard and his presence there seems to be implied by the reference in John of Fordun's Annals, ch.55.

² Haco Saga, p.322.

³ John of Fordun, Annals, ch.55, puts the total force of the invaders at one hundred and twenty ships; the discrepancy from the number given in the Saga is not great, but all through I prefer the Norse account, which seems straightforward and merits confidence by its refusal to disguise defeats.

⁴ Haco Saga, p.323; "Those soldiers so flight-shy
Of dart-storms bold wielder,
Drew boats over dry land
For many a length;
Those warriors undaunted
They wasted with war-gales,
The islands thick-peopled
Of Lomond's broad loch."

by/

the fact that on their return the Norsemen lost ten ships and their crews by the same storm that brought about the wreck of Haco's ships and the subsequent action near Largs.

On the night of Monday, 1st October, the storm struck Haco's fleet and caused several of the ships to drag their anchors. The flagship was, with great difficulty, saved, but three vessels were driven ashore. When dawn came, a force of Scots appeared, who attacked the shipwrecked crews with archery, but did not attempt a charge. The storm moderated as the day went on and Haco sent in a landing party to protect his men. On the appearance of those reinforcements the Scots withdrew, but during the following night they returned and plundered the wrecks./

In the morning of the next day, the 3rd October, Haco, to prevent further plundering, himself landed with a strong force and saw to the stripping of the wrecked vessels. Later in the day a strong body of Scots, comprising some cavalry and a large number of archers and men armed with pikes and bills came upon the scene, and Haco, at the urgent request of his men, returned to his ship.2.

The position of the Norsemen was now very precarious. They had seven hundred men on the rough shingle and

1. Haco Saga, pp.324-325. Probably these archers were only the country people of the districts round about and could not engage in a regular struggle with the Norsemen.

2. Haco Saga, p.326. This would be the vanguard of the main Scottish force coming up. The Saga puts the number of horsemen at five hundred, which is probably too great, and states that the horses were protected with mail; some of them may have been, but it could hardly be true of the majority. In any case owing to the nature of the ground, the cavalry could not operate freely, and the chronicle of Mailros, fo.62, is doubtless correct in attributing the success of the Scots to the footmen.

and/

shelving rocks of the shore in the vicinity of the wrecks, and a further two hundred under the command of Ogmund, placed as an outpost on a hillock a little inland. As the Scots advanced, the Norsemen on the hillock withdrew and were so hotly pursued that they broke and fled. The panic spread to the main body on the shore and a rush for the boats took place. As a consequence many men were drowned through boats being overcrowded and capsizing. Some of the Norsemen, however, rallied in the shelter of the wrecks and held out bravely. Reinforcements gradually worked ashore from the ships and the defenders were able to hold their own till nightfall and even to recover some of the lost ground. In the darkness the Norsemen withdrew to their fleet. They must have lost several hundred men in the storm and the fight; amongst the fallen were Haco of Stein and Thorgils, both members of the King's bodyguard./

On the following day Haco returned to the Cumbræes where he was joined by the fleet from Loch Long with its news of further losses in the storm. Influenced by this Haco withdrew further to Lamlash to settle what steps should next be taken. He himself wished to winter in Ireland and to renew the attack in the following year, but his men, dispirited and short of food, insisted on a return to Norway. The fleet sailed back by Islay and Mull to the Orkneys, losing one more vessel by a wreck in the Pentland Firth and having some foragers cut off by the people of Caithness. At Kirkwall the invasion was definitely terminated by the death of Haco.²

/Haco Saga, p.326. The statement of the Saga that the Norsemen held their ground is doubtless true, otherwise they would have been completely destroyed. At the same time I can hardly accept the assertion that they drove the Scots completely off the field; the confession that the Scots were able to remove their dead negatives the possibility of a rout.

²Haco Saga, pp.326-327.

Section 3. Position of the battle and other considerations.

Confusion arises from the fact that there are two Cumbraes and that there is no definite information as to which was Haco's anchorage. If this point could be established, the neighbourhood of the battle could easily be fixed, though not its exact point. As it was a southwesterly gale which wrecked Haco's ships, the battle would be fought on a part of the mainland slightly to the north of the anchorage.

If the Norsemen took shelter behind the smaller or southern Cumbrae, the wreck would be cast ashore nearer to Fairlie than to the modern town of Largs; if behind the larger Cumbrae, they would strike in the vicinity of the present battle tower. In either case the battle must have taken place in the bay between Farland Head and Largs itself.² If it may be assumed that the anchorage was in the shelter of the greater Cumbrae, it should be added that it was probably on the side where Keppel Pier now stands; Millport bay is too confined and rocky for a large fleet and has, moreover, a southern exposure.

The fight itself should have taught the Scots a valuable lesson as to their best means of defence. Since the beginning of history every general, with the possible exception of Hannibal, who has cut himself off from his base and attempted to subsist in a hostile country, has failed. There was nothing surprising in Haco's defeat; it was in fact inevitable from the start. The only hope of the Norsemen was to harass the Scottish coast to such an extent that the king would be glad to make peace at the expense of sacrificing the islands. That Haco realised this shown by his proposal that

¹A gale outside the south to west quarter of the compass is practically unknown on the Ayrshire coast.

²Largs is specifically mentioned by Wyntoun, ch.x, but I have an idea that the "Lairgs" was originally a name applied to all the coastal plain in the vicinity of the town.

that/

the expedition should attack Moray from the security of the Orkneys. The Norse king did his best for his fleet; it is useless to blame him for dividing it before a battle, because there is little doubt that Haco did not contemplate a battle at all and would not have fought one, but for the storm. The only inexcusable fault was the wasting of time, which took place on the outward journey.

The lesson, which, in the light of after events, the Scots conspicuously failed to digest, was that an invasion like a revolution, cannot stand still; it must destroy the hostile armies and occupy their territory or it will inevitably ^{fail} A powerful attack by the most formidable fighting people of the time had failed, not because the Scots had been able to win a great battle, but because through the wisdom of their king and the vagaries of the weather they had been able to avoid one. The obvious course of defence for every Scottish leader from the day of Largs onwards should have been to harass the enemy, to wear him out by surprises and stratagems, but, above all else, to avoid decisive battle except in the most favourable situation, until the nature of the country itself, its natural defences and its inaccessibility, should have wearied out the invaders.

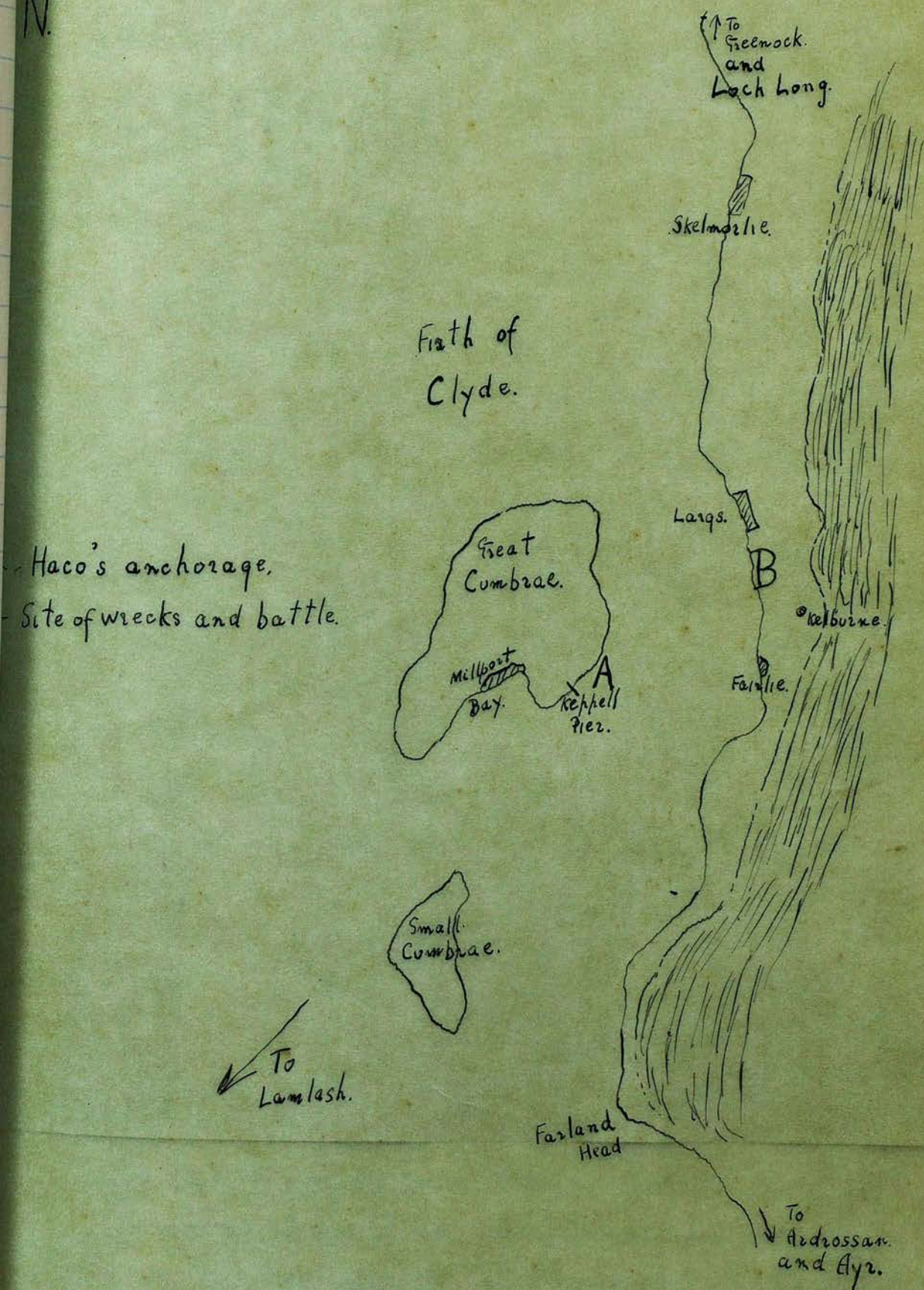
It need occasion no surprise that the Scots did not make a more determined effort to crush the Norse landing party entirely. There are three considerations which explain this apparent neglect of a golden opportunity. a. The great reputation of the Norsemen as determined fighters, who usually gave of their very best when in a tight corner. b. The fact that only a portion of the Scottish main body could yet have arrived. If the Norsemen had lingered on the beach for another day, the Scots would have been present in much greater strength and would have made a more determined attack. c. The point that the extermination of the few hundreds of invaders on the beach was of very little

little/

importance. From the moment of the bursting of the storm over the Cumbraes an ultimate Norse failure and retreat may be said to have been only a matter of time. Under these circumstances it would have been folly for the Scots to have risked a disastrous repulse.

Section of Ayrshire Coast to illustrate battle of Largs
(Sketch only).

N.



Scale approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ " to the mile.

Shading shows rising ground over 200 feet.

Part II. The War of Independence.

Chapter I.

Berwick and Dunbar.

Section 1. The fall of Berwick.

In 1295, a rupture between Edward I and John Baliol seeming inevitable, an alliance was formed between the Scots and Philip of France. In pursuance of the policy declared in this treaty and with the purpose of forestalling and rendering ineffective the invasion already being prepared in England, the Scots crossed the border in the early/spring of 1296./

Thanks to the beneficent rule of Alexander III, Scotland was by this time a fairly well organised country with a growing trade to which much importance was attached. Unfortunately military development had not proceeded at a rate commensurate with security, although some steps had been taken. The country had been immune from serious invasion ~~for~~ more than a century and, as a result, there do not seem to have been any regularly formulated schemes for a defensive campaign. Since the cessation of the trouble concerning the possession of the northern counties, relations with the southern neighbour had been, on the whole, good, and the Scots, lacking the incentive to efficiency, supplied by the presence of a dangerous neighbour, had in military affairs fallen behind the English, who had profited by the conflicts with the Welsh and the French.

/It will be noticed that I have accepted the assertion of the Scalacronica and of the chronicles of Lanercost and Meaux that the Scots took the first steps in the struggle. This, however, does not throw on the Scots the onus of a war, which had been rendered inevitable by the behaviour of Edward I towards Scotland.

The only direction in which the Scots had made progress was in the composition of their armies. The Gaelic element had practically disappeared and in its place came the forces of the burghers of the towns and of the freeholders of the lowland and eastern counties. Along with these men went the barons, who held by feudal tenure, with their quotas of retainers, and the Celtic earls, much milder in spirit than in the days of the Standard, with their particular retinues; in addition there would always be a proportion of the poorer peasants and men from the towns, partly as camp-followers and partly as light troops. Of the infantry portion of the army it is difficult to give exact particulars before the time when the Scottish parliament began to issue ~~exact particulars~~ regular directions for the arming of the country. It must suffice to say that the probable equipment for the better part of the foot would consist of pike, sword, axton, or leather jacket reinforced with small steel plates, and possibly a strengthened bonnet. The poorer footmen would have little defensive armour and would carry either spear or bow.

The better armed cavalry, as always, did not differ greatly in equipment from their English contemporaries. The latter were at this time wearing the complete chain mail with breast, back, and leg plates in addition; the helmet was of a rounder shape and was frequently closed by a visor and surmounted by a crest. The offensive weapons carried were the lance and a selection from the mace, flail, sword, axe, and hammer or punch. In addition it should be mentioned that the English, influenced by their contact with the Welsh on the western marches, had developed their archery to a pitch never approached in Scotland, though still far short of the point to which it afterwards attained in the south.

In March the Scottish raiders, led by the earls of Ross, Menteith, Athole, and others, devastated some districts

districts/

of Cumberland and burned the suburbs of Carlisle which lay outside the wall of the town. The attack, however, did not succeed in its object of diverting the English invasion of Scotland, and on 28th March Edward arrived outside Berwick with a strong force, which partly depended for its supplies on a fleet provided by the Cinque Ports. 1.

Berwick and Perth were at this time the only two protected towns in Scotland, but the wall at Berwick was really only a strong embankment, seven or eight feet high, covered by a ditch. The castle was distinct from the town and lay further up the north bank of the Tweed in the vicinity of the present railway bridge. 2. The town was at this time the centre of trade between Scotland and England and was one of the largest and most prosperous in the north. The garrison consisted of a detachment sent from Fife by Baliol/specially for the purpose and of the burghers themselves, some of whom were Flemings. 3.

Edward made overtures to the town for a capitulation, but his offers were refused and certain of his ships, either in attempting an assault or in carrying out their regular work of giving supplies to the army, were destroyed. To carry out their work and avoid the cliffs it was necessary for the vessels to enter the Tweed, and here they were caught on the Calot Shad presumably by the falling of the tide. A sally from the town resulted in the burning of the vessels, a deed which, together with the rejection of his offers,

1. John of Fordun, Annals, ch. 89; Scalacronica.

2. Owing to the multiplication of fortifications of different periods in Berwick, it is extremely difficult to trace the line of the old wall, but I have endeavoured to make the accompanying plans, which I prepared myself, give a rough idea of the line of the wall as it existed in Edward's time, a line which extended much further than the later Tudor fortifications.

3. John of Fordun, Annals, ch. 89; Chronicle of Meaux, II. p. 261; Scalacronica, fo. 198b.

offers, /

infuriated Edward. /

On the 30th Edward made a feigned retreat and, after a hurried return, was able to cross the ditch and burst into the town without encountering any serious resistance.² There followed a dreadful massacre in which thousands of the citizens fell and the men of Fife, apparently the most reliable portion of Baliol's forces, were destroyed. The only knight of note killed on the English side was Richard de Cornwall, who was shot by a Flemish archer. Shaken in spirit by the disaster to the town, the governor surrendered the castle on the same evening without waiting for an assault.³

Mar/

was able to persuade the countess to regard her husband as a traitor to Scotland and to admit the Scots. The English garrison was expelled with loss and the Scots placed in the castle a strong force.¹ Edward immediately sent forward the earl of Warenne with a division of the English army to attempt the recovery of the place.² This force attacked the castle and the garrison asked for a three days' truce in order to get help from Baliol; this request was granted by the besiegers.

On the 27th the main Scottish body appeared, descending the slope of the Lammermoors from the direction of Spott.³ In number it was probably superior to the English force under Warenne, but it must have been composed for the most part of men little experienced in war. The relieving body had been in communication with the garrison of the castle and an arrangement had been made by which the garrison was to give the signal for the advance of the field army by lighting a beacon fire on the castle. The garrison would then make a sortie at the same moment as the army attacked Warenne, and it was hoped that in this fashion the English body would be crushed between the two parties of Scots.⁴

Unfortunately for the success of the plan, Dunbar castle was situated on a rocky promontory, which was joined to the mainland by a narrow neck of land and was moreover commanded by a higher elevation on the mainland. Thus the English were able to put the garrison out of action by leaving a small holding force to repel any attempted sortie, and could turn to meet the advancing Scottish army with practically

¹ Chronicle of Lanercost, fo. 205.

² Hemingford, II. p. 103, puts it at one thousand horse, which is very probable, and ten thousand foot, which is certainly an exaggeration.

³ Scalacronica, fo. 129.

⁴ Chronicle of Lanercost, fo. 205b.

practically/
their whole strength.¹

The Scots were now almost in the narrow plain which bounds Dunbar to the south and the English, probably anxious to keep the coast route open, advanced down the hill from Dunbar to meet them. As the English proceeded hurriedly, their ranks fell into some disorder and the Scots were buoyed up by the thought that this was a sign of unsteadiness on the enemy's part. They were soon undeceived. On reaching fair ground again the English coolly reformed their array and then delivered a charge which the Scots were quite unable to withstand. The mounted section of the Scottish host fled after offering a very feeble resistance, and the footmen, inexperienced in the shock of battle, opposed by veteran troops, and disheartened by the flight of the men on whom they most relied, broke up rapidly. Their nearest refuge was the great forest of Selkirk and thither they fled. As far as the outskirts of the wood the English kept up the pursuit and thousands of Scots fell. Alone among the notables Sir Patrick Graham resisted to the last on the field of battle and fell where he fought. The English loss was trifling.²

After the relieving force had been disposed off in this summary fashion, the English returned to the siege of the castle. As they constituted an advance party which had been pushed forward rapidly, they were deficient in siege equipment and were compelled to have recourse to the simpler methods of attack. Mounds of earth were thrown up against the wall to give an inclined approach by which an assault could be made, and a mine was commenced. On the day after the battle the garrison, realising their hopeless position, cut off as they were from help both by land and sea, surrendered without

¹Chronicle of Meaux, II. p. 262.

²Hemingford, II. p. 104; John of Fordun, Annals, ch. 92; Meaux Chronicle, II. p. 262; Chronicle of Lanercost, fo. 205b.

without/

awaiting an attack. The prisoners, apparently the flower of the Scottish army, included the earls of Menteith, Athole, and Ross, between ~~thirty~~ twenty and thirty knights, and almost one hundred men-at-arms. /

With the rout of the main army and the capture of Dunbar the resistance of the Scots collapsed. Edward made a rapid progress through the east of Scotland, which was only terminated by the surrender of Baliol at Stracathro. The organised forces of the country had proved quite unfit for the task of checking the English, and it was left for time and the needs of the case to produce the natural methods of resistance and the men who could follow them.

Section 3. Lessons of the campaign.

The reason for the defeat of the Scots is evident. They were foolish enough to play the English at their own game and came off second~~nd~~ best. The English may have been inferior in numbers, though the difference cannot have been great, but they were seasoned troops, experienced in war and enjoying a better equipment than that possessed by the Scots. The circumstances being such, the Scots should have endeavoured to discover a new mode of fighting suitable to their means and natural resources and should have tried to engage their veteran enemies in a type of warfare for which their experience had not adapted them. Whenever the Scots adopted the wrong course and embarked on what was, for those days, a conventional campaign, they laid themselves open to a crushing defeat. It remains to examine the particulars of the struggle.

The initial move of the Scots in striking first and in raiding their opponent's territory was a good one. It gave the troops a much needed opportunity to acquire experience and confidence in themselves through early successes

/Chronicle of Meaux, II. p. 262; Hemingford, II. p. 104; Chronicle of Lanercost, fo. 205b; Scalacronica, fo. 199.

successes./

Its object of diverting the hostile attack would have been successful in the case of most mediaeval generals. Edward I, however, was too sensible to be drawn into a difficult and prolonged pursuit of a mobile raiding force, a pursuit which would consume time and the energies of his men without leading to any decisive result. Instead he pushed forward his invasion of Scotland, relying on the marauders being drawn back home by the danger to their country. Both parties, in a word, were employing the same strategy, Edward trying to draw home the Scots by invading their lands and the Scots endeavouring to divert Edward by ravaging the north of England. Thus the matter became one of endurance, rather of the spirit than of the flesh, and in this trial of morale the Scots gave way. Many excuses can be made for them. Their country had long been immune from attack and prospered in trade, so that a destructive invasion must have seemed to them a very terrible affair. Moreover they were conscious of their superior numbers and, through their inexperience of battle, quite unaware of the tremendous advantage which the English would enjoy in regular combat. It is safe to say that, if Scotland had been engaged in war and had been seriously attacked and ravaged two or three times in the previous decade, the invasion of Cumberland would have been pushed on and Edward's sack of Berwick and advance up the east coast ignored. Such a policy would probably have been successful, because of the impossibility, proved many a time in later years, of maintaining a large army in Scotland for a prolonged period.

When Edward had succeeded in imposing his strategy on the Scots, the end was in sight. The most deplorable feature and, in fact, the fatal one of the rest of the struggle was the flagrant misuse which was made by the Scots of their fortresses. The shutting up of the men of Fife in the town of Berwick was a step which seriously weakened the

the/

field force. Not content with this initial blunder, the Scots proceeded to coop up the flower of their army in Dunbar castle and so placed themselves in the position of having to force a rescue. Fortresses are meant as supports for armies, not armies for fortresses. Neglect of this cardinal principle compelled the Scots to fight an offensive battle in which they could have no advantage of position to counterbalance their lack of experience.

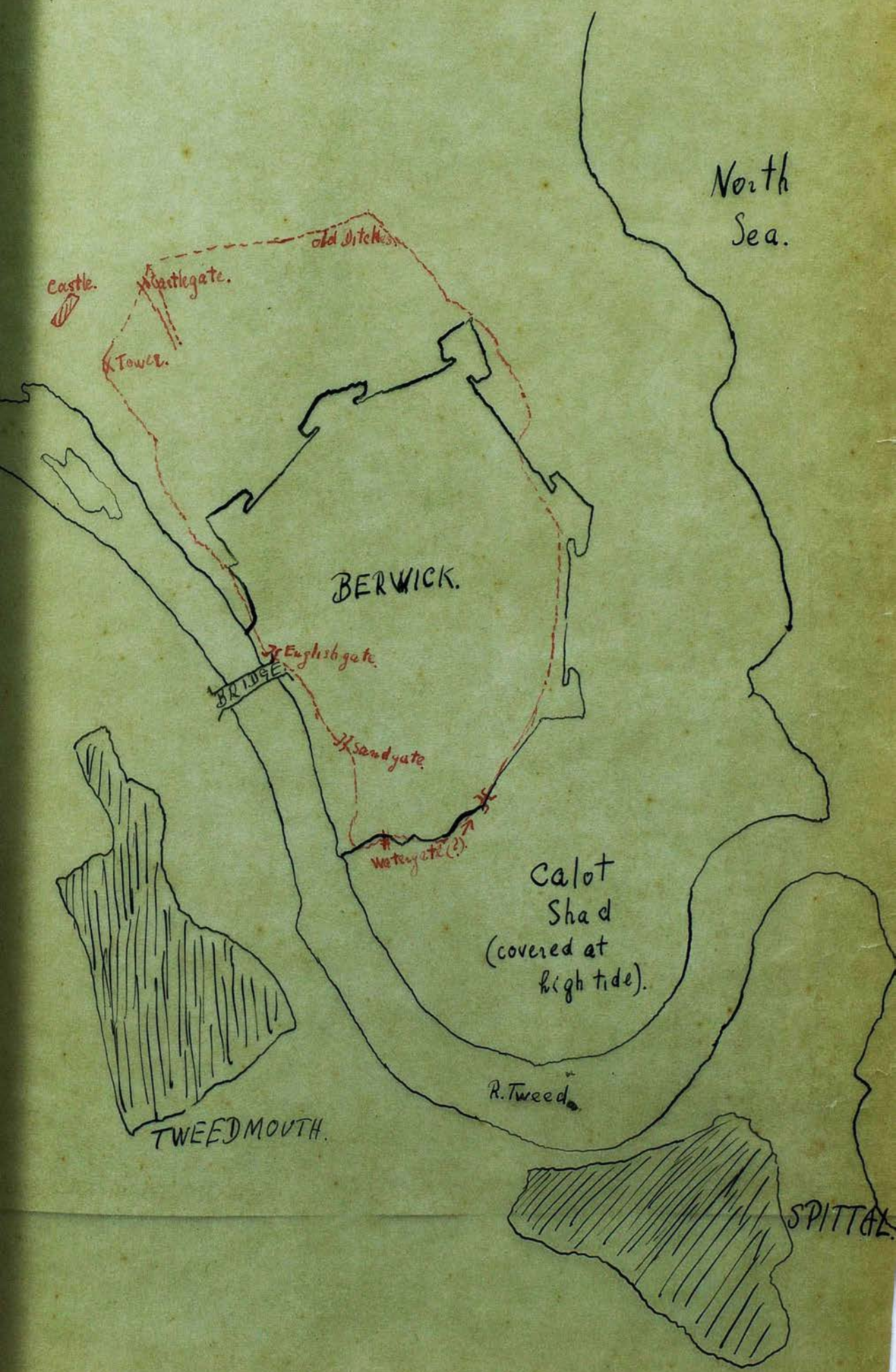
There is little to be said about the battle. So far as can be seen, it must have been a mere hurly-burly in which the Scots made little resistance. No new tactics appeared on either side. It may be argued that the Highlanders of the days of David would have fought much more manfully, but it must be remembered that their wild courage led nowhere, while the thrashing that the Lowlanders here received taught them a salutary lesson. The Scottish soldier was learning that his proper course was to fight ~~in the open~~ on the defensive and on foot, not in the open where an efficient body of cavalry was a necessity. The flight itself was probably due more to nervousness than to panic; the Scots, in fact, in the words of the German general before Metz, needed to be "shot at a little."

On the whole the campaign of 1296 shows signs of progress on the part of the Scots. The history of the months of March and April is indeed a catalogue of disaster, but there are redeeming features. The wild Celtic element was disappearing. More attention was being paid to the formation of a steady and well armed body of foot. But it was for the Scots a period of transition and in such a period they naturally suffered. They were ~~in~~, in fact, in process of learning from mankind's two greatest masters, bitter necessity and their own mistakes. In the subsequent epoch the successes and defeats of the people were alike numerous, but two principles remained fixed. Never again, if we except the

the/

slight deviation of Bruce at Methven Wood, was undue reliance put on fortresses or heavy cavalry. The Scottish footmen and their leaders, in triumph and disaster, relied on themselves alone. Nor was this all. The rout had taught them the folly of disorganised lines and ~~rude~~^{loose} attack in the face of a disciplined enemy. In the pangs of Dunbar was born the schiltrons of Bannockburn.

Map of Berwick with suggested line of
old fortifications (in red).



for fortifications in black.

Chapter II.

Wallace and Stirling Bridge.

Section 1. A new strategy.

It is unfortunate that we know so little of the earlier career of Wallace in his rebellion against the English invaders. Only the main outlines of the story remain to us, such as the fact of the slaying of Hazlerig and the surrender of the notables at Irvine. But enough is known to show that Wallace was not the only partisan leader of the period./

Prominent among the other leaders of risings was the young Andrew de Moray, who in May and June of 1297 sadly troubled the English garrisons in the neighbourhood of Inverness.

In the operations of these leaders there evolved a new strategy, which, like most such phenomena, was the product of circumstances. Pitched battles were conspicuous by their absence. Any large English force could move across country with comparative freedom and would, indeed, find it very difficult to draw any Scots into action. On the other hand any small body, such as a convoy or a detachment of reinforcements, was assiduously tracked and marked down as a prey by the Scots; similarly, small and weak castles were sure, sooner or later, to be surprised or stormed at the very moment when no help could reach them.

The irony of the situation lay in the fact that while the English could easily muster a force strong enough to march from Berwick to Elgin, as Edward I had done in 1296, such a body was of very little use. By the nature of its composition and the amount of baggage which it required it could not penetrate into the remote fastnesses and forests where the Scots lay hidden, and so its march became a vain parade. Unless it stuck closely to the coast where it could draw

/Entries in Bain, Rotuli Scotiae, Stevenson's Documents, etc.

draw/

supplies from its attendant fleet, it could not be kept together for long, and, as soon as it was broken up, its detachments were exposed to danger of defeat from a concentration of Scottish bands. Scotland was, in fact, rapidly becoming a country like Spain, "a country in which large armies starve and small armies get beaten", and the English held little beyond the walls of their castles and the outskirts of their camps.

A large part of the success of Wallace in his raids in the spring of 1297, e.g. his attacks on Perth and on the castles in the district between that town and Dundee, was undoubtedly due to the nature of his forces. The men whom he commanded were necessarily the most independent and daring in spirit of the people. Many of them were outlaws and practically all were fighting with ropes round their necks. Those only could expect to be spared who could afford a large ransom or who were of value to the English king as lieutenants. Under these circumstances no enterprise was too bold and no risk too great for the followers of Wallace. In addition it should be remembered that the church of Scotland was wholeheartedly on the side of the patriots and that this clerical support was a great stimulus to many of them.

It was the very essence of the Scottish strategy that they should always know where to find the English and that the English should never know where to find them. Such being the case, fixed points of defence were necessarily abjured, and when a castle was taken it was dismantled so that it might no longer serve as a link in the English chain which bound the country. This determination to avoid a pitched battle except in the most favourable circumstances was the very feature of the operations which baffled the English and which reduced them to a state of exasperation which largely explains their premature action at Stirling Bridge. It may be objected that such strategy as that of the Scots could not produce any

any/

great or sudden success and was very trying to the country. In theory this is true, but in practice the fact remains that at this time it goaded the English into reckless action, and that in the time of Edward Baliol it tired them out by its persistent pinpricking. At the least it precluded any chance of a crushing disaster which would prostrate the whole country before its enemy.

Section 2. The battle of Stirling Bridge.

After the capture of Perth and the successful raid on the district between that town and Dundee, Wallace engaged in the siege of Dundee castle, the most serious enterprise that he had yet undertaken. While he was thus occupied, he received intelligence that the earl of Warrene and Hugh de Cressingham were advancing north with a large force. As the line of the Forth was the natural position of defence and as that line was most vulnerable at Stirling, Wallace hastened to defend that point with all his available troops. The continued blockade of Dundee castle was entrusted to the burghers of the town, who had taken the side of their countrymen. Wallace had been reinforced by Andrew de Moray, the younger, with the troops of the Moray and Inverness districts, so that he had under his command the strongest Scottish force which had assembled since the battle of Dunbar. His action was apparently a bold one, but in reality it committed him to nothing, as his line of retreat was always open. His position was in fact rather one of observation with the possibility of successful action if the English should act rashly.

The news of the Scottish successes in the midlands and the north had alarmed the English and Warrene had hastily gathered a force in the northern counties. He had one thousand heavy cavalry and a body of footmen; as usual it is impossible to ascertain the number of foot accurately, but, judging by

/ John of Fordun, Annals, ch. 99.

by/

the losses sustained, ten thousand may be a reasonable estimate. The line of advance was, as usual, by Berwick, and Stirling was reached on the 10th of September. Wallace and Moray had so far offered no opposition, but contented themselves with holding the wooded slopes of the Abbey Craig above the abbey of Cambuskenneth. In this position they were able to command the northern end of the long narrow bridge and could conceal the number of their forces, which comprised close on two hundred horsemen and several thousand spearmen. Moreover it must be noted that the position of Dunbar was now to some extent reversed, in the sense that many of the English and Welsh were probably raw levies, while the Scots army was composed of veteran patriots nerved to fight to the last./

In the early morning of September 11th an advance party of English and Welsh crossed the bridge without encountering any opposition, but soon afterwards withdrew again the move having apparently been made without Warenne's authority.² When the English host was fully awake and marshalled on the plain to the south of the bridge, a council was held to determine what means should be adopted in crossing the river. The only alternative to the bridge was a ford which could be crossed by forty men abreast.³ Sir Richard Lundy advised that a frontal attack should be made on the bridge, while he with half the cavalry should distract the attention of the Scots by crossing the ford and executing a flank charge. This course of action, which was probably the best under the prevailing circumstances, was rejected on the ground that the army could

¹ Henry Knighton, p. 379.

² " , p. 378.

³ But, so far as I can ascertain, the ford was tidal and could not be reckoned on as a means of retreat.

could/

not be divided in the face of the enemy./At this stage in the discussion Cressingham advised an advance across the bridge and his counsel was adopted by Warenne.²

The extraordinary decision to which the English came has usually been attributed to the influence which Cressingham exerted over Warenne, the assumption being that Cressingham was no soldier. But while the course which was advised was undoubtedly wrong, there are considerations which show that the English were acting with a certain amount of reason. The error into which almost all writers have fallen is to suppose that the Scots were determined to fight a battle. To make this assumption is to reject the lesson of all the previous strategy of Wallace and Moray, which consisted in avoiding actions except when the circumstances were favourable. If the English had exercised every precaution and had crossed the ford in due order, the probability, which nobody seems to have considered, is that the Scots would simply have slipped away and resumed their guerilla warfare. It is surely not too much to suppose that the English leaders, who had clear enough heads to see the weakness of Lundy's plan, realised this risk. The main difficulty of the English up to this point in the war had not been to beat the Scots, but to find them. Having at last found the Scottish main body it was by no means unnatural for the English leaders, and especially for Cressingham who was concerned about the expense entailed by a long war, to desire to pin down the Scots at once and thus force them to a decisive action. The fear of a protracted campaign and their own overconfidence were, I venture to

/An excellent principle initself; but its application here is a trifle amazing in the light of the fact that the English immediately afterwards proceeded to divide their army by the width of the river.

²Henry Knighton, pp. 379-380.

to/

suggest, the main motives which impelled Warenne to rush into the trap.

The English vanguard, under the command of Sir Marmaduke de Twenge, proceeded to cross the bridge, and was rapidly followed by the main body including Cressingham and the standards of the king and of the earl. At this point in the proceedings the mass of the Scottish spearmen left the shelter of the woods and advanced quickly across the open in a compact body. Straight for the bridghead they drove and in a few moments they had pierced the thin column of the English and had cut the hostile army into two sections. De Twenge had ventured ahead too rashly in a successful charge against the small body of Scottish cavalry and had thus left the infantry unsupported. The archers could not come into action owing to the limited extent of the ground and the suddenness of the Scottish charge. The scene on the bridge was now one of wild confusion. Those behind strove to push through to the front, while those in front recoiled from the hedge of Scottish spears. In the struggle many of the English were precipitated over the parapet and drowned. The section which had crossed and was now cut off made a desperate attempt to secure a retreat, but the Scottish schiltrons held firm and defied all efforts to force a passage. Despairing of safety by any other means, hundreds plunged into the river in a wild effort to cross, but were all drowned with the exception of a single knight. Of the vanguard de Twenge alone, with his nephew and a mere handful of followers, refused the desperate expedient of swimming back and succeeded in cutting a way to safety through.

The English had quite possibly underestimated the Scottish force. The woods of the Abbey Craig would conceal its strength, and it is very doubtful if Warenne could know that Moray and his followers were with Wallace.

through/

the Scottish spearmen./

Meanwhile the English on the south bank of the Forth had been horrified spectators of the debacle. A panic arose at the possibility of the Scots crossing the bridge and Warenne, apparently forgetful of the fact that he held as strong a defensive position as the Scots, broke down and burned his end of the bridge and hastily retreated south. The English, on their own admission, had lost one hundred knights and men-at-arms, including Cressingham, and five thousand foot; in a word, the whole body which had crossed the river. The Scots, thanks to their close and steady array and the comparative absence of archery fire, escaped lightly.²

Section 3. True Scottish tactics.

The action at Stirling Bridge gives us our first example of a Scottish victory, and as a consequence many fresh conclusions can be drawn from it. The tactics employed by the Scots in the battle form the complement of the guerilla strategy indicated in the first section of this chapter. The new strategy of the Scots consisted in harassing the English out of certain sections of the country, and their new battle tactics provided a means of preventing a reoccupation of the liberated districts.

In any battle against the English the Scots had two main disadvantages to overcome, the superiority of their opponents in well equipped cavalry and the deadly efficiency of the hostile ~~cavalry~~^{archery}. Of these two arms the archery was infinitely the more dan^ggerous, and throughout Scottish military affairs it was the chief obstacle to a supremacy over the southern enemy. Although repeated attempts were made in later times by the Scottish king and parliament to foster the practice of archery in Scotland, the art never really

/Henry Knighton, p.381.

2. " , p.382.

really/

flourished in the north. The Scottish leaders at Stirling Bridge were faced with the problem of overcoming the hostile archers, without any possibility of doing so by a superiority of fire. Their solution of the difficulty was a masterly one.

The only fashion in which the problem could be solved was to put the English archers out of action at once, and this was done by the choice of the position covered by the river and by offensive action before the English could deploy. The advantages of the position cannot be fully realised until an analysis is made of the difficulties of the English. To get the archers into action it was necessary to send them across the river and this provided the insoluble problem. To send them over first was to expose them to certain destruction at the hands of an energetic enemy, because archers unsupported would be of no more use than an army entirely composed of artillery. On the other hand, to send over the cavalry and billmen and retain the archers to the last meant that the battle would probably be commenced and decided before they could take any effective part. To mingle the different sections was to abolish control and engender confusion. Dupplin Moor, Crecy, and other battles prove that the archers were most effective when they were given room to deploy. So long as the Scots could force the enemy to concentrate his troops in order to surmount a natural obstacle, such as a river, they held the advantage. The other two conditions necessary for success were that the Scots should take rapid offensive action before the English could extend, and that they should have a body of foot sufficiently strong to prevent the English cavalry clearing an area in which the archers could act. Whether Wallace and Moray came to these conclusions deliberately and chose their ground accordingly or whether they simply chose what seemed to them the strongest defensive position and acted as opportunists, it is impossible to say; but the fact remains that Stirling Bridge with its defensive-

defensive-/

offensive tactics should have been a model for every subsequent Scottish leader.

The first condition, namely that offensive action should be combined with a suitable defensive position, demanded sound rather than brilliant generalship. The second condition, that the Scots should have a body of foot able to withstand the English cavalry, was satisfied by the creation of the schiltrons.

There has been a certain amount of discussion about the origin of this body. Briefly it may be said to have been a compact body of men, several ranks deep; the members of the body were armed with spears, which were of different lengths for the various ranks. The spears were made with wooden shafts and iron or steel heads, which were continued for some distance down the shaft in order to prevent the head being cut off by a sweeping blow of sword or axe. When the spears were directed to the front and flank the effect was to produce a hedge of points calculated to give pause to the fiercest cavalry charge. If necessary the rear of the schiltrons could be closed also and a defensive "square" established. Offensive action was by no means impossible with such a body, but it required a fairly high efficiency among the men and an unbroken piece of ground for the advance.

Attempts have been made to ascribe the formation of this body to the influence of the Flemings, who used it successfully at Courtrai against the French cavalry. But as the battle of the Spurs was not fought till 1302, the formation cannot be said to have proved itself on the continent till a date subsequent to both Stirling Bridge and Falkirk. In any case there is no need to search for causes which are doubtful, when the explanation seems clear. X

1. Wellington's conduct at Busaco is an admirable example of good coordination on the lines indicated.

The schiltron was not an original formation, though it may have seemed so to the cavalry leaders of the time. In outline it was a revival of the old phalanx instituted by the Thebans in the time of Epaminondas and developed by the Macedonians in that of Philip and Alexander. The object in both cases was the same, namely~~ly~~ to resist the attack or break through the defence of a longer thinner line by superior weight and absence of flanks. In other words, the demand of circumstances produced both the concentration employed in ancient Greece and that in mediaeval Scotland, and it is rather misleading, though very convenient, to ascribe the origin of the formation to individual men. It was merely the fact that footmen were discredited for almost a thousand years after the battle of ²Hadria~~ople~~ in 366, that gave the schiltron an appearance of novelty.

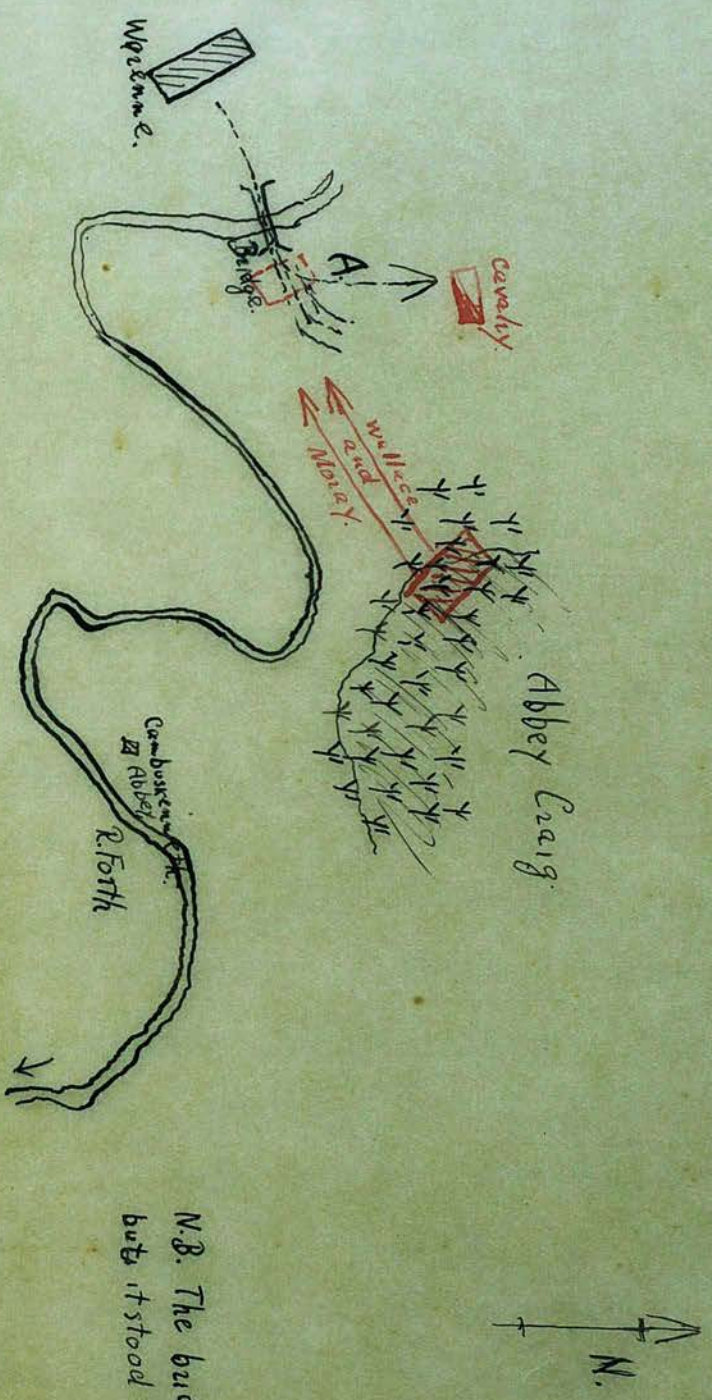
Note. The question of extension or concentration of the line has always been one of the greatest importance. The Greeks employed the extended line till it proved too weak to face the phalanx. The Romans employed the concentrated formation, till the necessity of rapid manoeuvring in hilly ground in the Samnite wars made them extend their infantry. During the period of their supremacy they were rarely faced by a foe expert in the use of missiles, and the result was that they themselves neglected this branch. As a result the Gothic and Persian wars saw the failure of the Roman infantry, and infantry stood condemned thenceforth. But this was an erroneous conclusion, as the blame did not rest with the infantry but with the organisers who thought that an army could be made up of one arm only. Therefore an infantry revival was inevitable at some time or another, The English, being fairly strong in cavalry and very strong in archery, naturally fought in extended order, and the Scots, almost totally lacking these arms, had to concentrate. It is noticeable that the English, since the time of the Norman Conquest, have



have/

always relied mainly on missiles or musketry, and have clung to their extended formation e.g. in the Peninsular war at a period when the concentrated column was held by European experts to be the ideal formation.

Battle of Stirling Bridge. (Sketch Plan).



N.B. The bridge has entirely gone, but it stood well up the river.

Stirling Castle.

English in black.
Scots in red

A----- de Twange's charge.

Chapter III.

Falkirk.

Section 1. The intermediate period.

The catastrophe at Stirling marked the end for the time being of the English supremacy in Scotland. Matters had come to such a pass that the presence of Edward himself was imperative before further operations could be carried out. As the king was overseas at the moment and was fully occupied with French affairs, the Scots could safely count on having the autumn and winter months in which to prepare their resistance against the coming of the inevitable invasion.

Wallace, besides opening relations with certain continental powers and providing a temporary government for Scotland, elected to raid the northern counties of England. As numerous Scottish strongholds, including Stirling itself, the key to the Forth, were still in the hands of the English, it is open to question whether Wallace would not have been better employed in getting a thorough grip of the country. But it is necessary to notice that sieges, even if they had been undertaken, could hardly have been successful. The Scots, being deficient in siege machinery, were of necessity reduced to the practice of blockade, e.g. at Stirling where de Twenge held the castle. In numerous cases even blockade was out of the question owing to the fact that the coastal fortresses could be revictualled by the English fleet. In addition there must have existed among the Scots a strong feeling that the sufferings of Scotland in the previous two years should be visited on the English. Wallace may quite reasonably have thought that a successful raid might bring pressure on Edward which would induce him to grant at least a truce to the Scots. Such a purpose, if it existed, was defeated by the resolution of Edward and by the agreement by Philip of France to a truce

truce/

with the English,/ thereby leaving them, contrary to anything that Wallace could have expected, entirely free to deal with the Scots.

The raid itself had no great results except, perhaps to increase Edward's anger and hasten his coming. Following on Warrenne's retreat the Scots advanced to the borders where they divided their forces. Wallace, with the main body, proceeded into the northern counties of England to ravage, while Henry de Haliburton marched on Berwick with a detachment. As the fortifications of the town had not been strengthened greatly since its capture by Edward, ²he was able to occupy the town.³ The position was, however, indefensible, and the first serious English advance compelled him to evacuate it. Meanwhile another party was engaged in attacking Roxburgh castle, which was held for the English by Robert de Hastings. Some engines seem to have been used in the siege, but the attack was ineffective, as the barons of Cumberland and part of the garrison ^{of} Carlisle were able to surprise the Scots and drive them off with the loss of their engineers.⁴

While the Scots did not suffer any serious check apart from that at Roxburgh and were no doubt able to do a good deal of damage to the English marches, it is impossible to acquit Wallace of a certain amount of blame. The splitting up of the army prevented the winning of any important success, and the neglect to cover the siege of Roxburgh was a serious fault. In the light of the developments of later years, and especially of the Douglas period, it is noticeable that the Scots do not seem to have enjoyed any advantage over the

¹Chronicle of Meaux, p. 270.

²This neglect was apparently due to Cressingham's parsimony; a stone wall was soon afterwards built.

³But not the castle.

⁴The Scalacronica, pp. 200.

the/

English in the matter of mobility; rather the reverse, in fact, as the English marchers were able to make their concentration and strike their blow without any serious counter-stroke being launched.

Section 2. The battle.

The continued successes of the Scottish patriots roused Edward to action and a parliament was held at York near the end of May. At this assembly arrangements were made for the attack on Scotland and the rendezvous was fixed at Roxburgh on June 25th. There the English army met; it was composed of three thousand cavalry, nearly a half being heavily armed, several thousand infantry, almost all from Wales and Ireland, and a contingent of Gascons.¹

To meet such a force in the open, where his footmen could be outflanked and surrounded, was no part of Wallace's plan. Instead he stripped Lothian of supplies and retired to the fringe of the great Tor Wood between Stirling and Falkirk, ready to seize any opportunity that might arise for a successful sally on the invaders. His army was somewhat different to the victorious force of Stirling Bridge, but its strength still lay in the infantry, of whom he had probably as great a number as Edward. The cavalry arm had been strengthened since the previous summer by the accession of certain barons and knights of the Comyn faction and now reached a total of a thousand. In addition the Scots had made, for the first time, a serious attempt to strengthen the missile section of the army and as a result there was present in Wallace's force a party of archers from Ettrick and Selkirk under the command of Sir John Stewart of Bonkill.²

¹Hemingford, II, pp. 173-174.

²But these archers for the most part would be armed only with the short bow, which was not nearly so effective as the long one; this fact accounts for their inability to check the English cavalry charge.

Edward met with no opposition in the first stages of his advance, but does not seem to have hurried forward. Possibly the delays which took place were due to the difficulty of obtaining supplies, which had to be provided for the most part by a fleet. When the English reached Kirkliston a halt became imperative, as the communications were being seriously interfered with by the garrisons of Dirleton castle and two other neighbouring towers. Antony Beck, bishop of Durham, was sent to destroy these points of resistance, but was at first repulsed with loss owing to his lack of siege engines. Edward urged a renewal of the attack and, after a further two days' siege, the Scots in Dirleton surrendered. The other two keeps were found abandoned and were destroyed by fire./

At this point in the operations a serious of misfortunes befell the English troops. The disadvantage of having to rely on a fleet for supplies was demonstrated by the prevalence of a contrary wind which kept back the transport vessels and left the English seriously short of food. At the same time, and possibly as a result of the shortage, the always existing bad feeling between English and Welsh blazed out in open quarrel and a fray took place in Edward's camp in which several of the Welsh were slain. Moved by these occurrences and by the remonstrances of his barons, who feared ~~their~~ treachery on the part of the Welsh, Edward was on the point of moving to Edinburgh to secure direct communication with his fleet, when there came to him the earls of Angus and March, to report that the Scottish army was close by Falkirk and was preparing to attack the English by night if they retreated. This act of betrayal took place on July 21st.²

Edward now cast all hesitation to the winds and ordered an immediate advance. On the evening of the same day

/Hemingford, II pp. 174⁴-175⁵.

2. " , II, pp. 176-177.

day/

Linlithgow was reached and there a bivouac was formed for the night, Edward sleeping amongst his troops. During the night the king was trampled by his horse which was picketed close by, but in the morning of the 22nd he pushed on the advance. As the English pressed on ~~the~~ from the south-east between Lauriston and Slamannan Muir, evidence of the presence of the Scots began to appear in the retreat of advance parties. Finally the main body was sighted a mile or two south of Falkirk itself.

Wallace had taken up position on the hill flank with his right almost resting on the fringes of the ~~Tan~~ Tor Wood, which extended far to the west. The front was covered by a morass, / of whose existence the English seem to have been ignorant, but the left wing was bare. The position seemed at first to be a strong one, but it lacked many of the advantages of that of Stirling Bridge. The marsh could be passed at the sides by large bodies of cavalry, who would then find ample ground to manoeuvre between it and the Scottish infantry. This meant that the English horsemen could not be dealt with in detail, but would be able to keep enough ground clear for the operations of their archers. The fatal weaknesses were the presence of the clear space in front of the Scots and the fact that diagonally across their rear ran the river Carron, which rendered almost impossible the retreat of their left wing. Wallace had arranged his infantry in four schiltrons with the archers occupying the gaps and the flanks, while in the rear was stationed the cavalry ready to ~~pass~~^{crush} any body which might pass the schiltrons. 2.

/Darnrig Moss.

2 Hemingford, II, pp. 178-179; "Statuerunt enim Scoti omnem plebem suam per turmas quatuor, in modum circularum rotundorum, in campo duro, et in latere uno iuxta Fawkyrk. In quibus quidem circulis sedebant viri lancearii, cum lanceis suis obliqualiter erectis; coniuncti quidem unusquisque ad alterum, et versis vultibus in circumferentiam circularum; inter circulos illos erant spatia quaedam intermedia, in quibus statuebantur viri sagetarii. Et in extrema parte retrorsum erant equestres eorum! regular Waterloo formation in fact, but lacking the artillery.

The English van, composed of cavalry and commanded by the earls of Hereford and Norfolk, was checked by the presence of the marshy pond which they passed by making a detour to the west. Antony Beck with the second division passed it to the east and thus a double attack was made on the Scots. The headstrong barons got out of hand and made a reckless charge. The Scottish horsemen, though not immediately threatened, fled at once, and the exposed and defenceless archers were cut down wholesale, Sir John Stewart being killed; only those escaped who were able to reach the edge of the wood or to take shelter in the ranks of the schiltrons. The English charge was continued, but when it met the solid resistance of the spearmen, it recoiled in defeat and disorder.

By this time Edward had arrived on the scene with the English main body, containing most of the foot, and himself took charge of the battle. Realising that further cavalry charges were for the moment useless, he ordered the archers to the front and commenced a systematic bombardment of the defenceless Scots. Pinned to their ground by the presence of the English cavalry, the Scots could only endure as best they might the shower of arrows and large stones with which they were pelted. As more and more men fell, it became impossible to fill up the gaps in the schiltrons and the hedge of spears became broken. Then Edward loosed his cavalry in a second charge and the spearmen, unable to close up and make a resolute stand, were scattered. Once the ranks were broken the isolated groups and individuals were ^a easily ridden down by the heavily armed horsemen and several thousands of the Scots were slain. The survivors of the left wing found their retreat cut off by the Carron and were mostly killed or drowned. In fact the only part

But hardly, I think, through treachery. It is not too much to suppose that the horsemen, shaken by the sight of the huge mass of English cavalry and unaware of the strength of the shield of Scottish infantry in front of them, fled in sheer panic.

part/

of the Scottish infantry which escaped was that on the right wing, which was able to reach the shelter of the forest. The English losses were practically confined to the norsemen who fell in the unsuccessful attack on the schiltrons, though a few, including Brian le Say, master of the order of the temple, were killed in the pursuit./

Section 3. The weakness of the schiltrons.

The result of the battle of Falkirk and the nature of the operations which preceded it are so different from that of Stirling Bridge, that some attempt must be made to account for the failure of the Scots to repeat what they had performed with an inferior army in the preceding year. Throughout the piece, however, in addition to the factors influencing the Scottish actions, it should be borne in mind that the English leadership was infinitely superior to that of the previous campaign and that the Scots could not afford to make any mistakes at all.

The first clear point is that up to the disastrous fight itself the campaign was going well for the Scots. The stripping of Bothwell and the absence of any definite resistance made the English invasion a mere blow at the air, while the presence of the harassing force at Dirlinton, trifling⁸ as the diversion may have been, shows a realisation of the true means of defeating the attack. In the absence of a battle there can be little doubt that Edward could not have pushed on much further, in fact could not have lingered much longer in Lothian. An ultimate English retreat through shortage and uncertainty of supply was inevitable. Up to the point of the English halt at Kirkliston Wallace's strategy was admirable. A position of observation had been taken up, which rendered it impossible for the English to scatter their forces without risking a disaster, and the country had been

been/

so treated that to keep the English army concentrated was rapidly becoming out of the question. Why, then, stake on the result of a decisive battle the fruits of a campaign which was already practically won.

Wallace's presence on the eastern outskirts of the Tor Wood is accounted for by his desire to strike a blow at the English in the case of a retreat. He seems to have been fairly well informed of the state of affairs in the hostile army and his conception of a night attack, in which the English archery would be useless, was a good one. But although it is easy to explain his presence in the neighbourhood of Falkirk, it is difficult to understand why he elected to stand his ground when he was threatened by an English attack in full array and in broad daylight. Retreat into the shelter of the forest would have been easy, for the Scots must have had several hours warning of the English advance.

The obvious, in fact too obvious, solution is that Wallace was a mere partisan leader and not a great general and that consequently he, by misreading the lessons of Stirling Bridge, underestimated the strength of his opponents and overrated his own. In this there may be a certain amount of truth. Certain it is that he had never yet encountered a general of the calibre of Edward I, and that the English army was organised and handled in a fashion of which the Scots had had no experience. In addition he lacked the influence and advice of the young Andrew de Moray, who had done so much for the Scottish cause in the previous year. There are, however, other factors which show that Wallace was not entirely his own master at Falkirk.

The Scottish army in the battle consisted of three arms. Of these two, the cavalry and the archers, proved to be little better than useless. But the very presence of these two sections was bound to influence the conduct of the Scots and may have helped to bring about the determination to fight

fight/

a pitched battle. The cavalry was largely composed of the supporters of the Comyns who were adherents of the Baliol cause. As Wallace was himself a Legitimist, or supporter of Baliol, and was governing in the name of the exiled king, the Comyns were able to exert a certain influence over him. This influence was increased by the fact that, though Wallace was commander of the host, yet he was inferior in rank to many of the notables on the Scottish side. In addition there may have been some feeling among the Scottish soldiers in favour of a battle; it is always difficult for men to stand quietly by and watch their country being maltreated by an enemy, especially when they feel it in their power to defeat that enemy. In the end we are left to choose whether Wallace blundered in his own person or whether he was, more or less reluctantly, brought by external influences to fight the battle.

With regard to the combat itself there is little to be said. The presence of the cavalry and the archers on the Scottish side made it necessary to take up a position outside the woods, but, as has been already pointed out, the position chosen had serious weak points. It could have been improved by resting the right wing on the wood, the left on the marsh, and covering with the centre the gap of open ground between the two natural obstacles; such an arrangement would, however, have necessitated a retreat if the English had met it with a flank march round the east of the morass. It is an interesting question whether it would not have been an improvement to put the archers actually inside the schiltrons and thus cover them by the spearmen. Such an arrangement would have prevented pointblank fire, but in the case of the short bow this was rarely used except at short range.

In Scotland at this time there still existed the dispute between the Baliols and the Bruces as to the possession of the crown.

The faults of the schiltron appear clearly as a result of the battle. Unsupported and caught on ground where the enemy could extend, it had to submit to gradual destruction. Once the English archers had come into action, such a result could not be avoided, but something should have been done to prevent the situation arising. The critical point of the battle was at the repulse of the English cavalry charge. At that moment the Scots had two alternatives, either to follow up their advantage by a vigorous offensive which might hurl the discomfited horsemen into the marsh, or, in the absence of cavalry and archers on their own side, to break off the fight and retreat into the wood. Both courses were difficult to pursue in the turmoil of the contest, but one or other should have been adopted and prepared for beforehand. Reliance on the help of other arms than that of the foot and on immobile defence and lack of manoeuvre brought about the ruin of the Scottish host.

Chapter IV.

Minor Operations.

Section 1. The siege of Caerlaverock castle.

The period immediately subsequent to the battle of Falkirk is devoid of outstanding incidents. After the failure of their attempt at resistance in the field the Scots reverted to the policy of harassing the English invaders. The fortunes of Wallace having declined, the leadership passed into the hands of the Comyns, who were at least able to prevent Edward gaining a secure grip on the country. The more accessible districts were, as usual, under the control of the English, but there continued to exist nests of resistance from which the Scots made frequent sallies. In the absence of a field force with which they might contend, the efforts of the English were directed towards the pacification of the rebellious areas. It was in these circumstances that Edward attacked Caerlaverock castle in the summer of 1300.

At Midsummer Edward held his court at Carlisle and ordered an assembly for an advance against the castle. In due course the force met to the number of three thousand barons, knights, and men-at-arms, with a body of foot. The cavalry was of overwhelming strength and included in its ranks the most prominent English warriors of the time. In addition a fleet was provided, which would sail into the Solway Firth and provide the besiegers with food and with engines for the attack on the castle.

Edward took the road over the border with his army divided into four squadrons under the command of Henry, earl of Lincoln, the earl of Warenne, the king himself, and the prince of Wales respectively. The horsemen were kept in close

close/

array and wore their full armour as a precaution against any surprise that the Scots might attempt. No resistance, however, was made to the advance of the English and they reached the castle after a slow and easy march without encountering any opposition./.

The castle² was triangular in shape and provided with a tower at each corner. One of the towers was especially strong and was situated immediately above and in defence of the drawbridge gate. The walls were strongly built and were adequately protected by wet ditches. Approach to the fortress from the west and south was prevented by the waters of the Nith and of the Solway Firth, while access from the north was rendered difficult by the bogs and marshes which existed.³ The feasible line of approach was by the high ground to the east past the modern farms of Locharwoods.⁴

1. Walter of Coventry, pp. 5-59.

2. It was situated less than a quarter of a mile from the present building.

3. The modern Lochars Moss.

4. Walter of Coventry, pp. 61-63; "Its shape was like that of a shield, for it had only three sides all round, with a tower on each angle; but one of them was a double one, so high, so long, and so large, that under it was the gate with a draw-bridge, well made and strong, and a sufficiency of other defences. It had good walls, and good ditches filled to the edge with water, and I believe there never was seen a castle more beautifully situated, for at once could be seen the Irish Sea towards the west, and to the north a fine country, surrounded by an arm of the sea, so that no creature born could approach it on two sides, without putting himself in danger of the sea. Towards the south it was not easy, because there were numerous dangerous defiles of wood, and marshes, and ditches, where the sea is

(note continued at foot of next page).

On arriving at the east side of the castle the English, under the direction of the Marshal, proceeded to construct a camp of tents and wooden huts in which the army took up its quarters in three divisions. Soon afterwards the ships of the fleet arrived with supplies and necessary engines for the siege and Edward decided on an immediate assault./

The first move against the castle was made by the footmen, but they were met by such a storm of stones, arrows, and crossbow bolts, from the engines and bows of the garrison that they were rapidly repulsed with heavy loss. The knights and men-at-arms then advanced to the attack on foot and in armour and pushed up to the edge of the moat and the end of the bridge. This reckless rush met with no greater success than had the attack of the footmen, and the heavily armed force, though protected by defensive armour, lost several killed and many disabled, the contingents of Bretons and Lorrainers suffering severely. More scientific methods were ultimately adopted and Adam de la Forde set to work to mine the wall, while an attack was made upon the gate itself. In spite of the pressure of the assault and the fact that the English, being so numerous, were able to fight in relays, the Scots held out all through the first day and night and well into the second day.2.

1. Walter of Coventry, p. 65.

2. " , pp. 67-83; we are not told that the English passed the ditch, but as ~~minig~~ ~~is~~ specifically mentioned, the assumption is that they did or that one part of the wall was not protected by the moat.

on each side of it, and where the river reaches it; and therefore it was necessary for the host to approach it towards the east, where the hill slopes." It will be noticed that there is no mention of a keep. The weakness of the castle seems to have been that it was possible for battering engines to come within effective range of it without great trouble.

day./

Every English advance and retreat had been harassed by the missiles of the garrison, while no adequate covering fire had been provided for the attackers, only a few engines being employed. But on the second day of the assault this was remedied and the English erected three new engines capable of throwing very heavy stones, which began to beat down the defences. The garrison, which only comprised sixty men and was worn out by the continuous assault, could not face this new fire and hung out a pennon as a sign of surrender. The soldier who showed it, was immediately shot in the face by an English archer, but, on his crying out that the garrison surrendered, the constable and the marshal, who were on the spot, suspended the attack./

When the Scots left the castle the English were astonished to find that they had been kept out so long by so small a body. Edward spared the lives of the prisoners and treated them well. The English banners were mounted on the castle, which was garrisoned and put under the charge of Clifford. 2

Section 2. The English reverses of 1303.

The events of this year provide two minor examples of the successful employment of guerilla tactics by the Scots. By this time John Comyn was Guardian of the country and, perhaps as a consequence, more use was made of mounted men-at-arms. While the operations of such troops were hindered by the difficulty of traversing rough country, a superior measure of mobility, always a factor of primary importance in guerilla warfare, was gained.

Early in 1303 John de Segrave advanced into Lothian with the English wardens of the marches, Ralph de

/Walter of Coventry, pp. 85-87.

2. " , pp. 87-89.

de/

Manton the Cofferer, and Patrick, earl of March. On the 23rd of February^y the English encamped in the vicinity of Roslin, the advance guard being at a league's distance from the main body owing to lack of camping room. This was, of course, a careless step, and seems to have been accompanied by a lack of outpost precautions. The English were probably thrown off their guard by the fact that there was no Scottish force in the immediate vicinity, Comyn and Simon Fraser being at Biggar in Lanarkshire.

Through the night the Scots, apparently mostly mounted men², made a forced march over the hills, and attacked the main body under Segrave early in the morning. Although the Scots were, on the whole, heavily outnumbered, they had the advantages of surprise and of the division of the hostile force. After a desperate struggle Segrave and his troops were routed and driven off the field, several prisoners being taken by the Scots. A little later the English van, apparently ignorant of the fate which had befallen their main body³, came upon the scene. The Scots were dismayed by the approach of these fresh troops, but Fraser and Comyn succeeded in heartening their men, and they advanced to the combat, after slaughtering their prisoners for want of men to guard them. The struggle was renewed and again the Scots prevailed, the English being driven off and Ralph the Cofferer captured. The Scots, as a result of their successful action, made large captures of equipment and horses, the possession of which was to them of great value through the prevailing scarcity

1. John of Fordun, Annals, ch. 108; the Scalacronica, fo. 200b; the ground at Roslin is still broken and wooded.

2. John of Fordun, Annals, ch. 108, in his account of the combat describes the charges of the Scots cavalry. Still it is probable that a certain number of them fought on foot.

3. The Scalacronica, fo. 200b.

scarcity/

consequent upon years of warfare./

In the same year Edward entered Scotland by Roxburgh with a force of over nine thousand men.² A camp was made at Dryburgh for the main body, but Sir Hugh de Audley, who was at this time warden of Selkirk Forest, pushed on with Sir Thomas Grey and sixty men-at-arms to Melrose, possibly with the object of clearing the King's advance, and took up quarters in the abbey. The opportunity was too good a one for the Scots to miss, and Comyn made a night attack on the abbey. The Scots rapidly burst open the gates leading into the courtyard and, rushing in, overpowered the small English force.³ The remainder of Edward's march of that year was devoid of reverse but it is a notable fact that so little dismayed were the Scots that they were capable of causing serious alarm to the

/There is a marked discrepancy as to dates and details in the accounts of the action at Roslin contained in the Scalacronica and in Fordun. Fordun gives the date as 27th July, 1302, the Scalacronica as 24th February, 1303. The matter is settled by an entry in Bain, II, 1347, where Ralph de Manton is said to have lost a horse (which is valued at twenty pounds, a large sum at that time) on the date as given in the Scalacronica. By the old calendar the year would of course have been 1302.

Again the Scalacronica states that the English were in two sections, Fordun that they were in three. I have preferred the former version as being more probable in a military sense. The Scalacronica makes out that Ralph de Manton was killed, but Segrave reported to Edward that he was taken prisoner----Bain, II, 1976.

²Bain, II, 1356.

³The Scalacronica, fo. 201; Sir Thomas Grey, the father of the author, was taken prisoner on this occasion, but he must have been released very soon after as he was again in the English ranks at the Siege of Stirling castle.

tne/

English by raids on the marches from Annandale and Liddesdale.

Section 3. Conclusions.

The fall of Caerlaverock demonstrates several points of interest in connection with the strength of the mediaeval castle, but its chief attraction lies in the opportunity which it affords for a criticism of the methods of attack employed by Edward.

It cannot be said that the episode shows Edward in a very favourable light as a commander. It is evident that, with the overwhelming force at his command, he was foolish enough to think that he could rush the position. In coming to this conclusion he was doubtless encouraged by the hot-headed barons and knights by whom he was surrounded, and who on this occasion, as at Falkirk, got out of hand to some extent. As Edward was by no means a person of weak character, it is easy to realise the difficulties experienced by a mediocre leader in attempting to control the feudal chivalry.

As a matter of fact the attempt at a coup-de-main might as well not have been made. The first attack by the footmen was a complete failure and the subsequent efforts of the men-at-arms only served to swell the losses of the besieging force. The only advantage that was gained was the tiring out of the ^garrison, which rendered the Scots more inclined to surrender when the bombardment commenced. The headlong attack would have been intelligible if the English had had no alternative means of reducing the fortress, but, as siege engines were at hand and could be brought into operation after a short interval, all that was required was a little patience. It was the bombardment that reduced the castle, and there is little doubt that if reliance had been placed in it alone, the English success would have been almost as speedy

(Bain, II, 1374; this is an order of Edward to the deputy wardens to call out the levies to resist the raiders.

speedy/

and much less expensive.

The success with which a very small garrison in a castle of the ~~smallest~~ second class resisted attack by a force infinitely superior shows that an assault would only succeed if it had the element of surprise or a weakness in morale on the part of the defence to aid it. On the other hand the speedy success which attended the operations of the engines demonstrates that with proper materials at the disposal of the besiegers, only the strongest of fortresses could make a prolonged resistance unless protected by the nature of the ground.

The behaviour of the Scots in defending a fixed point against the English attack was unusual, and, to some extent, ineffective. Caerlaverock was, however, of great importance to them as a raiding base and this fact may have influenced them in attempting a defence.

The Scottish success at Roslin~~x~~ and the surprise of the English detachment at Melrose are examples of successful night attacks. The movement of troops at night, especially in an offensive direction, has always been attended by the gravest risks of disorder and loss of touch and direction, and such movement has often been attended by disastrous results./. As a consequence night attacks have usually been deprecated by military critics.

The Scots had, however, at Roslin and Melrose no alternative method of attack available. If they had waited till daylight at Roslin, the English would have had time to

/Only from actual experience can any person realise the difficulty of keeping direction and sense of locality in real darkness, even in a neighbourhood which is well known. One of the great mysteries of the ages is that although the head of a column may be moving at no more than two or three miles an hour, the rear ranks are always running in order to keep up.

to/

concentrate and would have been too strong to be attacked, while to attempt to carry off the English detachment at Melrose under Edward's nose in broad daylight would have been far too hazardous an undertaking. But the Scottish march from Biggar and the burst into the English bivouac at the very hour when the power of resistance is at the lowest ebb were both well planned and executed. The fact that the Scots were operating in friendly country gave them security from fear of having their advance reported and an ambush laid for them, while familiarity with the country would also facilitate the operation. When skilfully carried out such an operation had, from the point of view of the Scots, one great advantage, immunity from the English archery.²

An additional point of interest, as has been already pointed out, was the employment of horses by the Scots as a means of rendering rapid movement possible. At Roslin the action was probably a mixed one, but at Melrose the Scots fought on foot in the assault on the abbey and thus commenced the development of their mounted infantry. It is interesting to notice that this employment of infantry for battles and of horsemen for raiding was a reversal of the usual practice of the time.

The raid at Melrose serves to show that even in the face of the neighbourhood of the English and of the overwhelming strength of Edward, the Scots still maintained the spirit of resistance unbroken and were to seize their opportunities. Even at this time, after six years of war, mostly made up of reverses, the Scots were able to control the area immediately outside the English zone of occupation.

1. Possibly Fraser deserves most of the credit.

2. A better example of the value of such immunity will be found in the battle of Otterburn.

Chapter V.

Methven Wood and Loudon Hill.

Section 1. The defeat of Bruce.

In the spring of 1306 Bruce initiated the movement which was to reach its height of success eight years later on the field of Bannockburn. His force at the beginning was small. So many promising movements had collapsed in previous years and so heavy had the hand of Edward been on the patriots that there existed, not unnaturally, an inclination on the part of the Scots to hang back and await a preliminary success before declaring themselves openly. An additional factor that militated against Bruce's popularity was his somewhat inconsistent behaviour in the past. Bruce was a noble, and the Scottish people had no great reason to put trust in any member of that class, especially in the face of the apparently well founded belief that the rebellion was merely another stage in the long quarrel between the Bruces and the Comyns. This belief was encouraged by the facts that John Comyn was murdered at Dumfries and that most of his party immediately declared for the English side.

It must, then, be premised that the action at Methven was one between the immediate supporters of the Bruce family and an English detachment, greatly strengthened by the members of the Comyn faction. Only when he proved his sincerity by perseverance in the face of misfortune did Bruce succeed in gaining the hearts and support of the people.

When Edward heard of the new movement in the country which he had fondly hoped was finally subdued, he lost no time in preparing an army to crush the rising in its early stages. But as an interval must elapse before the full force of England could take the field, he sent on Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke, to make head until the king himself should arrive. Pembroke, marching rapidly, passed Selkirk Forest,

Forest, /

where he laid waste the lands of Simon Fraser, / and halted at Perth, where his small force was protected from attack by the stone wall and towers which that town still possessed.

On June 19th or 26th² Bruce advanced against Perth. He had a force of fifteen hundred men, mostly drawn from his own earldom of Carrick and the lands of Lennox, Perthshire, and the eastern counties. Among his supporters were the earls of Athole and Lennox, the Frasers, Hugh de la Haye, Edward Bruce, Thomas Randolph, and the bishops of Glasgow and St. Andrews.³

In true feudal and chivalrous fashion Bruce advanced to the walls of Berth and issued a challenge to Pembroke to come out and fight on fair ground. Pembroke, who, if his later conduct at Loudon Hill may be taken as an indication of his character, was rather of the impetuous order, was quite willing to accept the challenge, but he was restrained by Ingram de Umfraville, who advised him rather to act with guile. Accordingly the challenge was declined and, as evening was approaching, the Scots withdrew to make their camp.⁴

Bruce was now guilty of an extraordinary piece of carelessness. On reaching the wood of Methven he sent off a third of his force to forage and allowed the others to disarm

¹Bain, II, 1782.

²The date is in dispute. Dunbar gives the arguments for both sides.

³Barbour, Book II, Mackenzie's edition; I have not thought it necessary to give the exact lines except in particular cases. The number given by Barbour on this occasion seems reasonable.

⁴The Scalacronica, fo. 203; Barbour declares that the challenge was accepted for the next day in order to throw the Scots off their guard; this may be true, but it looks suspiciously like a partisan attempt to explain the defeat of the Scots as due to treachery on the part of their opponents.

disarm/

and construct a camp. No force of observation was left to keep a watch on Pembroke's movements, with the result that he was able to assemble his force, leave Perth, and reach the immediate vicinity of Bruce's camp before the alarm was given. The Scottish cavalry hastily armed and mounted, but the surprise was complete and the resistance that could be offered to the English advance was of a desultory nature. The Scottish footmen, few in numbers, soon left the field and Pembroke was able to concentrate his attack on the mounted men. Bruce himself and his immediate followers performed prodigies of valour, but the initial handicap was too great and in the end the Scots were routed. Bruce himself, almost taken by Mowbray and rescued by Seton, with difficulty effected his retreat with a few followers. Randolph, Somerville, Simon Fraser, Christopher Seton, the earl of Athole, and other notables were captured and were, for the most part, treated with merciless severity by Edward. The Scottish force had, in fact, been completely scattered and Bruce retained what was little more than a bodyguard.

Section 2. Bruce changes his tactics.

The winter of 1306-7 was a period of depression for the adherents of the Bruce party, but in the spring came a revival marked by some notable efforts on the part of James Douglas. After a prolonged series of escapes and skirmishes in Galloway in the spring of the year, Bruce was able to emerge from his refuge in Glen Trool and march into the higher parts of Ayrshire. His force consisted of six hundred men and was very different in composition from the body which had been routed at Methven Wood, being made up almost entirely of

In face of the explicit statements in Barbour and the Scalacronica, I cannot see the reason for the assertion of ~~some~~ Professor Oman that the attack took place in the morning. Chronicle of Meaux, p. 276; Barbour, Bk. II; Scalacronica, fo. 203.

of/

spearmen. This was partly the result of the slaughter or falling off of so many of Bruce's supporters among the nobles, and partly of the fact that Bruce, through the difficulty of the ground in which he had been operating and through a change in his tactics, did not attempt to maintain any large body of horsemen./.

As Bruce was operating in the vicinity of Galston and was thus threatening to cut off all communication between the Ayrshire lowlands and the east, Pembroke moved out from Ayr to attack him. The unopposed presence of a body of rebels and the isolation, even if only partial and temporary, of the western district could not, from the English point of view, be permitted.² Bruce had, however, on this occasion ample notice of the English advance and was able to make full preparations to meet the attack.

On the western side of Loudon Hill, which is a rocky excrescence somewhat resembling an Ailsa Craig on dry land, the road rises for two miles in a long steady slope from the Irvine valley to the point where it crosses the neck of high land connecting the hill to the main plateau.³ On either side of the road at a distance of one hundred and fifty or two hundred yards⁴ began the series of mosses and bogs, which still occupy a great part of this district. Thus the flanks of a Scottish position astride the road were adequately protected from any movement of cavalry. To restrict further the line of the English advance Bruce dug three parallel lines of trenches with breastworks from the bog towards the road on both sides. The area immediately

¹It is worth noting that a supply of horses would, under the circumstances, have been impossible to obtain.

²Edward, like Cromwell at a later date, seems to have considered that Ayr was one of the keys of Scotland.

³From the statement in Barbour, Bk. VIII, that Bruce placed his noncombatants on the hill itself, it is evident that the Scottish position was to the westward.

⁴Barbour's "bowshot".

immediately/

beside the road was left clear to invite a charge, and this open space was manned by the Scottish spearmen in close array. In the rear of the position stretched the great moor of Drumclog in which the Scots could easily elude any pursuit by heavily-armed men and which was, as Claverhouse found to his cost centuries afterwards, a mere trap for a mounted force.

In due course Pembroke arrived on the ground with a strong force of men-at-arms. He was at once faced with the fact that any attack which might be made would have to be a frontal one and that the simplest flank movement would entail a detour of miles with the additional risk of moving in column to a flank across broken ground and the front of an enemy, whose mobility was, on the moors, superior to his own. To retire from an inferior enemy without an action was not to be thought of, as it would have been a most damaging blow to the reputation of the English, and to maintain a position in front of the Scots would have been difficult on account of the question of supplies. Accordingly Pembroke, whose force was split into two divisions, immediately ordered the leading squadron to charge along the road against the Scottish force.

The English men-at-arms galloped headlong on the Scottish spearmen, but the latter, as at Stirling and Falkirk, held together and easily shook off the attack. The stabbing of the horses and the fall of the foremost riders caused confusion and raised a barrier to any further English assault. The attackers had lost over a hundred men and their first division was badly shaken,

It was no part of Bruce's plan to prohibit an English attack; if it had been, there were in the immediate vicinity a dozen positions in which he could have defied assault. The matter was rather one of laying a trap for Pembroke, as a victory in the field was a necessity for Bruce at this time that he might gain prestige and increased support from the people.

But I agree with Mr. Barron that Barbour's three thousand is probably an exaggeration.

shaken, /

while the Scots were completely unharmed and were even showing signs of charging the broken ranks of the English. Accordingly Pembroke cut short the action, possibly in fear of a worse disaster, and retreated rapidly towards Ayr. In this he probably acted wisely, as a charge by his second squadron could only have served to swell the English losses and might, when repulsed, have led to a complete rout.¹⁸²

Section 3. A comparison.

Bruce at Methven Wood appears as an inexperienced and somewhat careless leader, who risked the success of his effort at the very start by an adherence to a mode of action not at all suited to Scottish requirements. For this failure to appreciate the true needs of the case he may be excused because of the facts that practically all his experience of warfare had been gained in the

/Pembroke has been rather severely criticised for this action.

Doubtless he was, as I have stated in the previous section, hot-headed and overconfident, but what ~~he~~ could he do? From his point of view to crush the Scots was an urgent necessity and an easy task. There is no indication that he had an adequate force of archers and, even if he had had them and had brought them into action, the Scots could easily have retreated out of range to an impregnable position. In fact the Scots were never more than a quarter of a mile from complete security. Pembroke only acted as nine out of ten commanders at the time would have done. As, according to his lights, he had to attack at once, the only improvement would have been to dismount his men.

²Barbour, Bk.VIII; additional explanations of Pembroke's rash behaviour exist in the facts that he was naturally exasperated at his repeated failures to get to grips with Bruce in Galloway, and that he was still smarting under a rebuke launched at him by the impatient Edward on the ground that he was too cautious----see Bain, II, 1896.

the/

cavalry sphere and that he had lived for years among men who held that the horse soldier was superior to the foot. Had he been present at the battle of Stirling Bridge or at one of the minor successes of the Scots, his action would probably have been different.

Similar reasons exist for Bruce's reliance on the mounted retainers of his supporters among the nobles. As has been already indicated, it was impossible for him to obtain the support of the people at that early stage. As a result the battle was merely one of those cavalry hurly-burlies, so common at this period, without method or plan, in which some slight factor might easily turn the scale. In this particular case the element of surprise was on the English side and gave Pembroke the advantage.

It is not so easy to excuse Bruce for the laxity of behaviour which led to the fighting of the action. The preliminary advance on Perth, though accompanied by some risks, could be justified. Pembroke's force was small and was far from any support so that it might be snapped up before help could arrive from the south. In addition it was very important that Bruce should win some initial victory in order to incline the waverers to his side by a prospect of ultimate success. But when the challenge to open combat was refused, Bruce should either have taken up a post of observation near Perth in which to intercept any sally, or else have withdrawn out of striking distance of the English.

Bruce learned his lesson. The leader, who committed so many errors in 1306, reappeared in 1307 as a general both skilful and wary. Never again did he engage in an action in which the advantage of position was not on his side, and it is doubtful if a single occasion can be found on which he gave the English an opportunity of crushing him. His general strategy developed in a fashion similar to that of Wallace; the maintenance of a strong body of experienced footmen with a small party of light horse as outriders and scouts, and the gradual reduction with this force of the districts least accessible to the English. Combined with this

this/

action was a readiness to seize the slightest opportunity for the destruction of an English detachment and a refusal to defend to extremity any fixed point which could be isolated by the invaders.

The combat at Loudon Hill was in itself a small thing, but it was the presage of greater successes to come. In a way it was a minor edition of the work of Stirling Bridge, for the position of observation, the trap, the narrow approach, and the ability to retreat if the English acted warily were all there. It was in fact an example of the "Heads, I win; tails, you lose" game, as played by the Scots. If Pembroke fought with every conceivable precaution, he could not hope to crush the Scots; nor could he hold the position for long, if they had been forced to evacuate it in face of the difficulty of supplying a force in so inaccessible a region. Not only could the Scots find a dozen alternative positions, but they could keep the field indefinitely. On the other hand, if Pembroke acted rashly or refused to fight at all, the advantage was bound to lie with the defenders.

The action itself was marked by the reappearance of the schiltrons in a modified form. Flanks and rear were, owing to the nature of the position, practically dispensed with, and the Scots were able to use all their spearmen to stiffen the defence to the front. A century later, in the light of the successes of the Flemings and the Swiss, the result would hardly have been doubted, but for Bruce, who was trying out these tactics for the first time in his career, it must have been an anxious moment when the leading files of the English men-at-arms thundered down with apparently irresistible force on the ranks of the spearmen. The result went to prove, as has often been demonstrated since, that, in the absence of missile or artillery support for the cavalry, a resolute body of footmen, suitably armed and keeping in close array, could rely on turning the charge of the best horsemen in existence. From the testing ground at Loudon Hill the Scottish spearmen marched with full confidence in themselves and in their leader.

Note. The inability of cavalry to break up a strong body of footmen is well known. This state of affairs is no reflection on the courage of the horsemen, but is rather due to the reluctance of a horse to charge home, unless wounded, and to the ease with which ranks of cavalry are thrown into disorder by the fall of the leaders. Exceptions to the rule exist, of course, but, when they are examined, it is usually found that there has been some unsteadiness on the part of the infantry leading to a gap in the ranks by which the charge has been able to penetrate.

Scottish Sieges.

Section 1. The failure at Berwick.

During the period from 1308 till 1314 Bruce was engaged in regaining the districts and, especially, the fortresses of Scotland from the invaders. In this he was greatly aided by the weak rule of Edward II and by the internal troubles which distracted England at this time. English invasions were foiled by an avoidance of pitched battles and by a cutting up of small parties, e.g. the slaughter of a detachment of three hundred Welsh and English in 1310./ But offensive action was not neglected and Bruce, by his raids in 1311 and 1312, gained spoils which provided him with the sinews of war. At the same time the Scots were very heavily handicapped in their operations against the castles by the almost total lack of siege engines and by the English predominance at sea. It was the latter factor which enabled coastal fortresses, such as Dundee, to hold out so long against the Scottish blockade.

In the absence of proper appliances for the reduction of the strongholds in English hands, the Scots were reduced to the employment of surprise attacks aided by such contrivances as their own ingenuity might suggest. An incident of this sort took place at Berwick in 1312, which, although it ended in failure on the part of the attackers, provides information concerning the manner in which they set about their task.

The attempted surprise was, as was usual, carried out at night by a picked body of stormers under the charge of Douglas and Randolph, but there was probably a strong supporting force in the immediate neighbourhood, perhaps under the command of Bruce himself. In the darkness the Scots stole up to the foot of the wall and proceeded with the task of setting up their scaling ladders. This,

1. Vita Edwardi Secundi, pp. 166-167.

2. Rotuli Scotiae, I, 79-80.

this/

delicate task was successfully accomplished, but at the critical moment, when the stormers were about to mount to the attack, the alarm was given and the Scots, their initial advantage being lost, beat a rapid retreat./So quickly did they decamp that the ladders, which, from their nature, were firmly attached and would have taken some trouble to recover, were left hanging on the walls, and were captured by the English and exhibited next day on the public pillory.

These contrivances were probably the most original and useful which the Scots had yet contributed to the science of war. Each ladder was made of rope, but with the steps, measuring thirty inches by six, constructed of wood, and kept, by knots in the side ropes, at intervals of a foot and a half. At the top of the ladder was a right angle grapnel, to rings in which the ropes were attached. Each arm of the grapnel was a foot long and it was so planned that one arm would lie along the face of the wall and the other across its top. This gave a firm grip and provided that the greater the weight on the ladder, the securer the hold would be.

As the first principle was that of securing silence atx all costs, and as the throwing of a grapnel would create noise and give the alarm, a hole was left in the grapnel. Into this hole was inserted the point of a lance, specially chosen as being equal in length to the altitude of the wall, and by the use of this the ladder was quietly placed in position. To prevent the ladder hanging too closely to the wall, a fault which might cause noise by scraping the surface or might seriously incommode theclimbers, fenders of soft material were fitted on every third step. By the use of such an appliance as this ladder noise was absolutely avoided, and the alarm could only be given by an accident or through the special care of a

/According to the chronicle of Lanercost and the V.E.S. the barking of a dog saved the town for the English.

a/

sentry. /

Section 2. Bruce's capture of Perth.

Towards the end of 1312 Bruce with the main body of the Scots advanced to the siege of Perth. The town, like Berwick, was defended by a stone wall with numerous towers, and by a wet ditch.² It was held for the English by the Scotsman, William Oliphant, and had been provided with a sufficient garrison.

The Scots maintained a blockade of the place for several weeks and engaged in numerous skirmishes with the garrison, but an open assault was out of the question, because of the strength of the defences.³ The time thus consumed was not however, wasted, for the king was busily engaged in reconnoitring the defences of the place with a view to the discovery of any weak points which might exist. Eventually he ascertained that at a particular point the ditch was fordable by men on foot. Having thus obtained the information which he desired, he ordered the siege, which had by this time endured for six weeks, to be raised. The Scots accordingly broke up camp and retreated openly, to the delight of the garrison.

The following week was spent by the Scots in the construction of scaling ladders for the impending assault. At the end of that period Bruce led his forces back to Perth by night, observing every possible precaution to preserve absolute silence. The retreat of the Scots and the interval, which had elapsed, had served their intended purpose; the watch on the walls had been relaxed and the garrison had been lulled into a false sense of security.

The chronicle of Lanercost, fo. 214b; comment would be superfluous; a more fool-proof device could hardly be imagined.

²Bain, III, 68.

³Bruce may have hoped to obtain help from the citizens of the town, but, if he did, he was disappointed.

84.

security./

On reaching the edge of the moat Bruce led the way into the water, closely followed by his best troops. The ditch was deep and the wading difficult, but the bottom of the wall was gained without misadventure or giving of the alarm. The ladders/were placed in position and up swarmed the stormers. A considerable section of the top of the wall was occupied and then the Scots ventured quietly into the streets. Not all of them, however, for Bruce himself kept a strong reserve at the top of the ladders in case of a repulse being sustained. The surprise was so complete that the garrison was unable to make any effectual resistance and the town was speedily captured. In accordance with Bruce's project of conciliating the burghers, the stormers shed as little blood as possible, with the result that the capture was attended with very small loss to either side. 384.

Section 3. Douglas storms Roxburgh.

Commanding as it did the junction of the Tweed and Teviot valleys, Roxburgh was one of the most important strongholds in the border district. Its position rendered approach difficult and it was strongly fortified, having, what was unusual in the Scottish fortresses of that date, a keep, in addition to the surrounding wall. The garrison was at the

(Presumably similar in construction to those captured by the English at Berwick.

2. This very necessary precaution has been frequently neglected by commanders in the heat of an attack. Such negligence nearly caused the failure of more than one British assault in the Peninsular war.

3. Barbour, Bk. IX.

4. The last document in Bain regarding Perth is dated October, 1312. Some idea of the strength of the garrison may be gained by reference to the list of well over a hundred mounted men in Bain, III, pp. 425-427.

the/

time of the attack commanded by Sir William de Fiennes./ The garrison was extremely unpopular in the surrounding districts, because of its raids, which had called forth complaints to Edward II from the neighbouring farmers.²

On Fastern eve of 1314³ James Douglas advanced to attack the castle. He had chosen his time well as the garrison was engaged in the feast, which was usually held at this time, preparatory to the rigours of Lent. The advance was not carried out in absolute darkness, but in the twilight. The Scottish stormers had, by the order of their leader, carefully darkened their armour,⁴ and, by advancing slowly and in a crouching position, they were able to reach the foot of the wall without arousing the alarm of the sentries.⁵

The Scots were equipped with ladders of the same pattern as those used at Berwick, which had been specially constructed for the assault by John Ledhouse. These were now placed against the wall, but not, as at Perth, without noise. The clatter attracted the attention of a sentry, who at once

/This is his name as given by the Scalacronica and the chronicle of Lanercost. Barbour, Bk. X, calls him Filinge, and there is a reference to him in Bain, III, 337, in which he is named as Felyng. According to the Lanercost chronicle he was a Gascon, while the Scalacronica calls him a Burgundian. Such are the joys of research.

²Bain, III, 337.

³The Scalacronica says definitely 6th March, and Barbour and the V.E.S., p. 200, both refer to the carelessness of the garrison common at such a time. Any date, such as that of Dunbar, seems to be ruled out by the document in Bain, III, 352, showing that the castle was in English hands in February, 1314.

⁴This afterwards became a common practice of the border raiders.

⁵Barbour declares that the object was to deceive the English into thinking the Scots a herd of black cattle.

once/

ran to the spot, but he was quickly stabbed by Ledhouse, who had darted up the ladder as soon as it was attached to the wall. A second sentry met with a similar fate, and the Scots poured over the wall and into the yard of the castle and burst into the hall where the feast was being held. The surprised and unarmed English were mostly cut down out of hand, but the warden and a handful of his men succeeded in seizing and barricading the principle^{al} tower, or keep.

Douglas was reluctant to attack in the darkness, which had by this time fallen, but throughout the night skirmishing went on. Apart from the tower the Eng~~x~~ Scots held the whole interior of the castle, and the English survivors were in a hopeless position. Nevertheless they defended their tower bravely until the governor was killed by an arrow shot. In the morning the Scots prepared for a regular attack on the keep, but this proved unnecessary, as the English were ready to capitulate on condition of receiving safe conduct to England. Douglas, who was probably eager to finish his work and get away from such a dangerous locality, readily granted this condition. As soon as the English had gone, the Scots fell to work to demolish the castle, a task which was speedily and thoroughly accomplished./

Section 4. The fall of Edinburgh.

The castle situated on the rock of Edinburgh was probably at this period only constructed of wood, but the natural strength of the position gave the garrison a tremendous advantage in defending it. Here, if anywhere, it might be said that the surprise tactics of the Scots would be of no avail, as it seemed impossible for them to approach the wall or palisade, except on the east side, where it was strongly defended. It was held in the spring of 1314 by a Gascon,

/Barbour, Bk. X; V.E.S., p. 200; the chronicle of Lanercost, fo. 215; the Scalacronica, fo. 207b.

Gascon;

Peter Lebaud, with a garrison of nearly two hundred men.²

The fortress had been blockaded for some time by a force under the command of Randolph, but little progress had been made towards effecting a capture. The success of the Scots at Roxburgh, however, stirred the besiegers to greater efforts and it was decided to risk an attack. Randolph was fortunate enough to secure the services of a volunteer, William Francis by name, who professed to be acquainted with a practicable path to the foot of the stockade. Thirty men were specially selected for the perilous task, and a ladder, carefully muffled, was provided for the actual escalade. Randolph himself took part.³

The ascent took place on the west side and was successfully accomplished despite the natural difficulties and the added risk of discovery of the enterprise by the English. At the same time the remainder of the besiegers made a noisy assault upon the gate of the castle and thus attracted the attention of the garrison away from the point of attack. Favoured by the success of this feint, the Scots were able to plant their ladder on the palisade and then, led by Francis, Randolph, and Sir Andrew Grey, to swarm over into the fortress. They were soon attacked by the English, but, despite the odds against them, were able to hold their own. The fall of Lebaud and the fact that the pressure on the gate had now become serious finally induced the distracted^a garrison to surrender after a brave resistance. The place was destroyed by the Scots.⁴

¹Or Loubaud; Bain, III, 254, 330; the Scalacronica, fo. 207b.

²This was the customary garrison in the time of Edward Balliol; see Bain, III, 1323.

³Barbour, Bk. X.

⁴The chronicle of Lanercost, fo. 215; the writer is, however, at fault in his points of direction. He states that the gate was to the south and that the ascent took place on the north side of the rock. The gate, however, could only be at the east, where the esplanade now stands. Correspondingly the ascent must have been made on the west side. Indeed the north side of the rock could hardly be approached if, as seems probable, the North Loch was in existence at that time.

Section 5. An appreciation.

So well planned and executed were the operations of the Scots in the surprises briefly described above, that adverse criticism becomes almost impossible. It is still, however, necessary to point out the details which are worthy of the fullest appreciation by the modern reader, and which were, unfortunately, seldom studied and applied by the Scottish leaders of the later middle ages.

The attack on Berwick was a failure, but it was a failure only through bad fortune. Even this repulse brings into prominence a feature, common also to the capture of Roxburgh. This is the determination of the Scots not to be drawn into an engagement at a disadvantage. The natural impulse on the part of the attackers at Berwick must have been to rush to the assault despite the giving of the alarm. But cooler counsels prevailed and, if a possible success was lost, a probable check was avoided. Even greater at Roxburgh must have been the temptation for the Scots to make an immediate assault on the keep, when they had already gained possession of the greater part of the fortress so easily. Again, however, the rules of discipline and order prevailed and the confusion of a night attack upon an organised defence was avoided. Still more worthy of praise is the moderation which Douglas displayed in granting a safe retreat to the survivors of the garrison at a moment when they were practically at his mercy. Not only would it have been difficult for him to conduct and guard prisoners, but it would have been foolish to linger a moment longer than was necessary in a locality where an English force, from Berwick or elsewhere, might appear at any time. The castle and not the English troops was the objective and of that fact Douglas was fully aware.

It will thus be seen that the object of the Scottish commanders was to avoid risk to their forces by every conceivable means. The only action of the four, which could by any stretch be described as rash, is Randolph's assault

assault/

on Edinburgh, but it must be allowed that the situation was in this case desperate, and that the remedy had to be correspondingly drastic. The lives of thirty men were staked against the gain of a position of immense natural strength; not, surely, an extravagant risk.

Bruce's capture of Perth was marked by the most judicious use of a reserve and by an ingenious stratagem for lulling the suspicions of the defenders. The trick was not original, having indeed been employed by various leaders, but it draws attention to the fertility in expedients shown by the Scots at this time. Except in the assault on Lithlithgow, every attack had the common feature of the escalade by ladders, but in the preliminary movements there appeared a diversity of plan, which well illustrates the ingenuity of the brilliant leaders who supported Bruce.

On the whole it may be said that the Scots, almost altogether lacking proper implements and faced by apparently insurmountable difficulties, won a triumph which will always remain a testimony to the powers of coolness, craft, and discipline. The more honour is due to them, as this was the only period at which they can be said to have distinguished themselves in the difficult role of besiegers.

It is not so easy to excuse Randolph for taking part in the climb himself. His motives are, of course, obvious and do him credit, but it is not the duty of a general to run risks, even when the object is the animating of his men.

Notably by Khalid, the Moslem leader, in the conquest of Syria and Persia in the 7th century.

Chapter VII.
-----Bannockburn. /

Section 1. Preliminary operations; the armies.

Hard pressed by the blockade carried on by a section of the Scottish forces under the command of Edward Bruce, Philip de Mowbray~~re~~ the warden of Stirling castle, made a compact with the besiegers, whereby he undertook to surrender the fortress at Midsummer, 1314, if, before that date, a relieving English force had not penetrated within three leagues of the position. After making this arrangement he proceeded to England to seek help from Edward II before the appointed day. The threat to Stirling, which was the key to the Forth and the most important stronghold in Scotland, together with the recent successes of the Scots at Roxburgh and Edinburgh moved the king from his usual lethargy and led to the assembly of a large force for the invasion of the north?

While the majority of the English notables were in favour of this action, certain of them, being at loggerheads with the king over Gaveston and other matters, would not take part personally in the campaign. Chief among the dissentients were the earls of Lancaster, Warenne, Arundel, and Warwick. They did, however, send their feudal quotas, so that the army, though not so strong as it might have been, was fully representative.³ Amongst

/I need hardly say that it is with great trepidation that I attempt the solution of a problem, which has been closely discussed by many writers of repute. Lest my treatment of the question should appear inadequate in regard to refutation of opposing theories, I must urge that I have to treat the battle in its position as an episode in the development of Scottish warfare, and cannot devote unlimited space to the carrying on of a controversy.

²The Scalacronica, fp. 207b; V.E.S., p. 200; Barbour, Bk. X, 820, and Bk. XI.

³V.E.S., p. 201; the chronicle of Lanercost, fo. 215.

Amongst/

the men of high rank who accompanied the king were the earls of Gloucester, Hereford, Pembroke, and Angus, Robert de Clifford, Henry de Beaumont, John de Segrave, Ingramme de Umfraville, and Giles de Argentine. The entire host probably numbered between twenty and twenty-five thousand men./

Of this mighty array the choicest parts were the men-at-arms and the archers. The period of chain mail, pure and simple, was now rapidly passing, and the heavy cavalry were equipped with crested and visored helmets, and chain mail body armour with the addition of plates at the knees, ailettes at the neck and shoulders and, in some cases, back and breast plates.² The shield was small and triangular in shape. The lance and long sword continued the favourite offensive weapons, but there was the usual assortment of crushing implements; a recent addition was the falchion, a modified form of the scimitar, used for cutting only. The footmen were comparatively lightly armed, their bodies being as a rule protected by coats of banded mail.³ The Welsh and Irish were usually ^{employed} as light troops.

The numbers of the Scottish army cannot be exactly ascertained and estimates of the total vary widely. Allowing for the thin population of the country, the wastage caused by years of

¹The Foedera writes providing for the summoning of over twenty-one thousand men are well known. To that number is to be added about five thousand for the Welsh and Irish contingents--see Bain, III, Intro., pp. xx-xxi--and three thousand heavy cavalry--Barbour, Bk. XI, and the V.E.S., p. 201, are nearly in agreement on this point. This gives a total of nearly thirty thousand; but a liberal allowance must be made for absenteeism, desertion, and straggling. A larger force could not be fed.

²The objection to chain mail was that it was possible for the wearer to suffer a wound without the armour being broken.

³The true nature of this means of defence has not yet been ascertained. See the late Mr. Ashdown's Arms and Weapons--IV.

of/

warfare, and the determination of Bruce to confine his force to reliable men, an estimate of about ten thousand may be fairly accurate. The archery element was almost entirely non-existent, and the mounted force was confined to a body of five hundred light cavalry under the command of the marshal, Sir Robert Keith. The great bulk of the force consisted of the spearmen, who were equipped with steel or iron caps, reinforced leather jackets, plate gloves, and spear and sword or dirk. Alternative to the plated leather jacket were chain neck coverings and back and breast plates.²

The comparison of the two forces would not be complete or fair, if mention were not made of the fact that the English were in part raw troops and were, perhaps, more hindered than helped by their unwilling Welsh and Irish auxiliaries, while the Scots were veteran soldiers nerved to fight by the highest of motives. Both forces were accompanied by considerable numbers of lightly armed followers, useless in defeat but helpful in victory, and the English, unlike their opponents, were encumbered by a mass of baggage and transport.³

Section 2. The evening of the 23rd.

Bruce had ample warning of the approaching attack and

1. This is an arbitrary calculation; any number between five and fifteen thousand could be advanced, but these are certainly the limits.

2. Acts of the Scottish Parl., i, 113; "Every landed man having ten pound in goods shall have for his body and defence of the realm, one sufficient acton, one basnet, and gloves of plate with a spear and a sword. Who has not an acton and basnet, he shall have one good habirgeon and one good iron jack for his body; and a hat of iron and gloves of plate." This act is, of course, later than the date of the battle, but, as Mr. Barron remarks, it represents the prevalent Scottish opinion of the foot soldier's equipment for that period.

3. V.E.S., p. 202.

and/

was able to choose and strengthen a suitable defensive position. The chosen ground was the elevated mass of land round St. Ninians to the south of Stirling, protected to the east and south by the Bannock with its bogs and pools and to the west by the edges of the Tor Wood. A direct attack on this ground by the English would entail the passing of the Bannock, an operation which could only be carried ~~by~~ out by large numbers at two points. The easier approach was by the old Roman road which passed the stream in the vicinity of Milton bog and continued through St. Ninians towards Stirling. This, the weakest point of the position, was strengthened by the digging of a number of small pits, about a foot square and deep, to make the ground as unsuitable as possible for the operations of cavalry.¹ The other route of approach to the position available to the English was to cross the Bannock some distance above its entry into the Forth and thus to debouch into the Carse between St. Ninians and the river. The space available for crossing was, however, very narrow,² as the ground at the actual junction of Bannock and Forth was hopelessly boggy; nor could the crossing be extended higher up, as the stream ran through a gully which, though it might with difficulty be crossed by footmen, was quite unnegotiable by heavy cavalry.

The strength of the position is at once realised. If the English advanced by the Roman road, the narrowness of the entry, with the presence of the pits and the rising ground, would make a charge difficult, while the passing of the Bannock lower down could only be done in detail and was attended by all the risks of narrow and wet ground. In either case Bruce could concentrate his forces to attack the enemy before they could debouch on open ground. To

¹Barbour, Bk., 360; 387. The "way" must be the old road. Everything seems to indicate that Bruce did not wish the English to attack by that route.

²Not, I am convinced by survey of the ground, more than five hundred yards at the most.

To/

facilitate such a concentration, his forces were arranged in four divisions so placed that they could take front rapidly either towards the Carse or towards the Roman road. The divisions were commanded by Randolph, Edward Bruce, Walter the Steward, and the king himself. Randolph was posted on the high ground at St. Ninian overlooking the Carse, Walter and Edward Bruce close together to the east of the road facing the Bannock, while the king occupied the interior of the angle and could at the same time cover the road or easily move to the support of either party. A weak point in the position was that it could be turned by a wide sweeping movement to the south and west, but such a movement would have taken time and would have enabled the Scots to retreat safely./

In the afternoon of the 23rd the English, coming from the direction of Edinburgh, approached the skirts of the Tor Wood. The advance was watched and reported to Bruce by Douglas and Keith,² and the Scottish scouts in their turn were discerned by the English van.³ It was now too late in the day to fight a decisive battle, as the Scottish position was still unknown in its details to the English. Accordingly the earl of Gloucester with a portion of the vanguard and some Welsh light troops, commanded by Sir Henry de Bohun of Hereford, pushed on along the Roman road to reconnoitre.⁴ This advance developed into a skirmish in which some of the Welsh were slain, and their leader, de Bohun, was brained by Bruce.⁵

At the same time a detachment of cavalry, led by

/Barbour, Bk. XI, 265-347, 348-453. Bruce's position was in fact the now familiar one of observation. He did not intend at any time to stand strictly on the defensive, but was ready to strike a blow at the English, if they afforded him a suitable opportunity. But, like Wallace and Moray at Stirling Bridge, he would have retreated if the English had taken all due precautions to outflank him.

²Barbour, Bk. XI, 454-460.

³V.E.S., p. 202.

⁴The Scalacronica, fo. 208; "l'auant garde, dount le count de Gloucestre estoit gouverneur, entrerent la voi dedenz le Park."

⁵Barbour, Bk. XII, 1-59; V.E.S., p. 202.

by/

Robert de Clifford and Henry de Beaumont, passed the Bannock at the lower crossing and attempted to ride round the Scottish position by the plain. This body had already proceeded far across the plain, when Randolph with five hundred of his spearmen descended from St. Ninians into the open. The English cavalry immediately pulled up and prepared to charge the Scots. Sir Thomas Grey, well aware that the party of horse was unsupported and better acquainted than his companions with the prowess of the Scottish spearmen, pleaded for caution, but was held up to scorn by Beaumont. The English made a headlong charge which was steadily received and repulsed by the veteran Scots, who directed their spears against the horses with

[Barbour, Bk. XI, 521-544, gives eight hundred as the number; the Scala cronica, fo. 208, states the sum as three hundred, which seems more probable. I must join issue here on the assertion that Clifford's sole object was to enter the castle. Barbour says so, but such a statement could only be on his part an expression of opinion. On the other hand the chronicle of Lanercost, fo. 215, asserts that Clifford's desire was to ride round the flank and prevent a Scottish retreat. This seems a perfectly good reason; in considering its plausibility three points must be borne in mind. a. The castle was already technically relieved. b. What could be the object in weakening the field army, above all in cavalry, to reinforce a castle which was in no immediate danger? c. The main object of the English was to destroy the Scottish army. The relief of the castle was an incident--a point which has been forgotten by most, if not all, writers on the subject. The fortress was bound to become the prize of the victors. What would it profit Edward, who could not remain in the vicinity for a prolonged period, to achieve a barren relief? As soon as he retired the castle would have been once more blockaded and the previous state of affairs restored. Permanent success could only be gained by a decisive victory over the Scottish field force; it is this fact which explains the determination of the English to fight, even on unfavourable ground.

with/

fatal results. William Deyncourt was killed and ~~Ray~~ Grey was dismounted and captured. The survivors of the English fled, some to the castle and some back across the Bannock to the king's bivouac./With this check to the advance hostilities ceased for the day.

Section 3. The battle.

Throughout the night the English were busily engaged in passing some of their force over the Bannock and the adjacent pools² and by the dawn they had mustered a strong force on the higher portion of the Carse facing the divisions of Edward Bruce and Walter the Steward. The narrow space available had, however, reduced the army to a closely packed mass, and had, with the difficulties of the ground, prevented the whole force from crossing. From the details of the subsequent action it is evident that the English body ready to commence the action was mainly composed of the cavalry, and that the infantry were jammed in behind. In this way the English had partially lost the valuable help of their archers before the battle started.

It was no part of the Scottish plan to allow the English to deploy on the plain unchecked, and to prevent this and restrict the English ground and ⁱimmediate advance was made, the division of Edward Bruce leading the way. As the mass of the spearmen pushed steadily into the plain, the English division of cavalry, with the earl of Gloucester in the van, hurled itself on the hedge of points³. The shock was terrific and large numbers of the English were hurled

¹The Scala., fo. 208; see Section 4 for arguments on this point.

²Barbour, Bk. XII, 390-408.

³There can be little doubt that both sides advanced--Barbour, Bk. XII, 409-421, the Scots "tuk the playne full apertly"; V.E.S., p. 203; the Scalacronica, fo. 208b; the chronicle of Lanercost, fo. 215b, the Scots "audacter contra Anglicos processerunt" and the English horsemen rushed "in lanceas Scottorum."

terrific/

and large numbers of the English were hurled to the ground by the stabbing of their horses. The Scots were, however, hard pressed and the divisions of Randolph and Walter successively entered the fight, Randolph coming up on the left of Edward Bruce. A desperate melee ensued, in which the earl of Gloucester was brought down and killed by the spearmen.1/

At this point the English archers came into action from behind their cavalry. Their fire, though largely indirect,2 was harassing the Scots greatly, when Keith with his division of light horse issued suddenly from the skirts of the Tor Wood and swept down the side of the stream.3 This unexpected charge was fatal to the defenceless archers, who were cut down wholesale and the archery diversion ceased. The great mass of the English were now penned in the narrow space between the Bannock and the Scots and the critical moment was at hand. Bruce, realising the crisis, flung in his division on the Scottish right flank,4 and the spearmen, now welded into one huge schiltrun, swung irresistibly forward. The English army was now being pushed into the angle of the Forth and Bannock as Bruce pressed on their left, and further resistance would only have resulted in the mass being precipitated into the deep tidal waters. The threat to the rear and the ever-~~xxxxxx~~ increasing pressure on the front had their effect. Aymer de Valence extricated the king from the mass and the great array rapidly broke up.

Flight was possible by the castle and some few, including the king, escaped by taking this route and riding round the Tor Wood to Linlithgow and Dunbar, hotly pursued by Douglas.5 Many fled to the Forth and were drowned there, while the majority strove to

1/V.E.S., p.204.

2/Baker of Swinbrook, p.10, alludes to some of the English being shot in the back by their own archers.

3/Barbour, Bk. XIII, 47-112.

4. " , Bk. XIII, 131-224; "and on a syde assemblit thai."

5. " , Bk. XIII, 359-394.

to/

return across the Bannock, which was choked by the slain and drowned. Nor was this all. An angry peasantry and a persistent pursuit rendered escape difficult, even for those who had succeeded in getting clear of the field. The stragglers perished in hundreds and many of the notables were taken, Dispenser, Beaumont, Hereford, Umfraville, and others being captured at Bothwell, while attempting to reach Carlisle. Argentine, like Gloucester, Clifford, and many of the knights was left on the field. The English army was in fact destroyed as a military force.

Section 4. Locus of the battle.

There are three main theories as the place and manner of the fight. Mr. Mackenzie holds that the English crossed the Bannock at the lower passage on the evening on the 23rd and formed their camp, or bivouac, in the angle of the Forth on the Carse itself. Sir H. Maxwell supports the theory that the battle was fought higher up in the vicinity of the Roman road, while Mr. Miller holds the view that the English crossed the Bannock low down and then moved obliquely to meet the Scots, the fight taking place opposite the Skeoch mill.

The first theory rests mainly upon the following points

1. The references to the crossing of the wet and boggy ground.
2. The raid of Athole on Cambuskenneth during the night of the 23rd.
3. The desire of the English to get the Scottish army away from the prepared ground near the Roman road.
4. The fact that both sides took the offensive, i.e. that Bruce did not act purely on the defensive.
5. The facility with which the English could on the following day, the 24th, move into Stirling from their camp on the Carse.
6. The reference in the Scalacronica to the English being encamped 'beyond the Bannock.'

1. The chronicle of Lanercost, fo. 215b.

2. The Scalacronica, fo. 208; the exact quotation is "Les uns des queux fuerent au Chastel, autres al oft le roy, qy ia auoint guerpy la voy du boys, eftoint venuz en un plain deuers leau de Forth outre Bannokburn, un mauueis parfouud rufcelle, ou le dit oft dez Engles destrufferent demurrerent tout nuyt, durement auoint perdu countenance, et eftoint de trop mal couyne pur la iournee paffe."

It will be seen that points 1,3, and 4 are quite compatible with Mr. Miller's theory. The raid of Athole was probably an isolated action of private vengeance, and did not necessitate the presence of the English army on the Stirling side of the Bannock. The fifth point, as has been shown in a previous section, rests on a common misconception of the English objective. The meaning of the Scalacronica quotation is ambiguous, as it may mean beyond Bannockburn as regarded from the point of view of the fight or from that of the English in general. But Clifford crossed the stream, advanced quickly over the Carse, and was routed after a short, sharp encounter. How then could the main English host have had time to cross the stream during the short interval?

The theory is, moreover, open to attack on two grounds. It neglects the incident of Keith's charge, which could not take place from ambush on the open ground of the Carse, and it stultifies the military intelligence of the English leaders. If it was desired to pass the Scots and reach the castle, the English could have done so perfectly easily and much more safely by keeping to the south and west. If the objective was to attack the Scots on an exposed part of the front, there was no reason for the camp on bad ground. Mr. Mackenzie, in fact, makes the English commit the following cardinal faults. a. Prefer a barren relief to a decisive blow, i.e. throw away the opportunity for which they had sighed for years. b. Move to a flank across the left front of a dangerous enemy. c. Make camp in a bog with a broad tidal river to the rear, in one of the worst positions imaginable. Edward II was no general, but it is impossible to suppose that veterans like Pembroke, Umfraville, and Argentine would have permitted such folly.

Sir H. Maxwell succeeds in drawing attention to certain weaknesses of the first theory, but he fails to prove his own. The

1. I do not for one moment admit that such was the case.

2. In addition it may be asked why the English did not complete their movement on the same evening, when a further advance of a little more than a mile would have put them in a place of security.

The/

reference to bad ground and the crossing of the pools cannot be overturned by a belief that it was impossible in the 14th century to cross the Bannock below the Roman road. No way^x is shown in which the English were brought up from the lower ground to the higher area on the skirts of the wood. Nor is it shown how some of the English managed to flee by the castle after the rout.

Mr. Miller's theory alone remains. It is at once the most credible in a military and in a topographical sense. It must be insisted that the object of the English was to strike at the Scottish army, and, as they had found by reconnaissance that the road route was difficult, it was necessary to cross the stream low down and then, turning half left, to move against the Scottish force. That the initial part of this movement took place at night is not disputed, nor is it doubtful that it might easily have been successful if the Scots had stood strictly on the defensive and allowed their enemy to deploy at leisure. By this theory the double offensive, the charge of Keith, the inability of the archers to get a clear field of fire, and the flight in three directions are explained. Nor is this explanation so much opposed to that of Mr. Mackenzie. The two points debatable are as to the time of crossing and the exact locus of the first collision. As to the course of the fight, the manner in which the English were forced back into the obtuse angle of Forth and Bannock, and the flight itself, there is little to dispute.

Section 5. Development of the defensive tactics of the Scots.

The tactics of Bruce are those of Stirling Bridge elaborated and carried to their logical conclusion. From the first stage of the campaign^{he} dictated his enemy's movements. Two courses of action were left to the English. a. To make a wide flanking movement. b. To fight on ground chosen by the Scottish leader. If the invaders had adopted the first course no battle would have been fought. The Scots would have made their retreat and the English blow would have been spent on the air and would have resulted in the temporary relief of the beleaguered fortress and nothing more.

The adoption of the second alternative entails a brief examination of the preparations of Bruce for meeting the attack. However inferior a general may be over the whole battle area, it must be his primary care to secure a superiority of force at the decisive point. Bruce brought the achievement of this purpose as near certainty as was humanly possible. Two routes of attack existed. If the English had fallen into the error of dividing their forces and using both, the Scots would held one attack with a small force and hurled their main body at the other. If one line of advance was adhered to by the English, the tactics of Stirling Bridge were to be repeated. A space of ground was left sufficient to tempt an advance, but insufficient for a deployment of cavalry and archers. The Bannock played the part of the Forth and the lower crossing that of the bridge. The obstacles were not, of course, so prohibitive nor the space so small as in 1297, but in the case of Bannockburn the numbers were much larger. As at Stirling Bridge, when the English horse and part of the foot had crossed and were ready to hold the ground for their archers, they were attacked and forced to fight in a restricted space where the cavalry could not find room to charge with great momentum. It was impossible to cut the retreat as had been done by Wallace, but this office was largely performed for the Scots by the angle of waters in which the English were confined.

Special features of the Scottish action are the cavalry charge, the splendid offensive of the schiltrons, and the use of a reserve by Bruce. Cavalry action by the Scots is a novelty worthy of note. The horsemen were lightly equipped and were not intended to be exposed to a shock with their heavier opponents, but to cut up light troops. In this they were successful, but the example of their action was not followed in later battles. With

/"The critical force at the critical point at the critical moment"; Clausewitz and Jomini both stress this point.

2 The fact that the English leaders avoided this error is a proof that they were not so incapable as has been generally supposed.

With/

regard to the charge of the spearmen, it should be remembered that Bruce's troops were veterans who could be trusted to keep their ranks even in a rapid advance. When the actual shock came, there would naturally be two or three spear points in the Scottish front for every single horseman who could come into action in the front line of the English, so that the success of the schiltrons is not surprising. With regard to the action of the reserve, it is sufficient to say that Bruce's handling of it may serve as a model. It was carefully withheld until the crisis of the battle was at hand and was then thrown into the fight at the moment when very little would turn the scale on either side./

/It is worthy of note that, owing to the diagonal course of the Bannock, it was possible for Bruce to bring in his reserve on the Scottish right flank, while it was impossible for the English to extend towards their left to meet his attack. The plan makes this point clear.

Sketch plan of the battle of Bannockburn.



English in black.
Scots in red.



A--- English advance (24th).
B--- Scottish do.

Stirling
Castle.

X Clifford (23rd)

English
bivouac.

quickers.

E. Bruce.

Dovesstone

Wether

St. Ninian's

Gillies H.II.

Van under
Gloucester
(23rd).

Bannock burn.

Chapter VIII.

Border Warfare.

Section 1. An unsuccessful siege.

During the period of fifteen years which elapsed between the battle of Bannockburn and the peace of Northampton the Scots made repeated raids on the northern counties of England. These inroads, which commenced immediately after the victory, constitute the only period during which the Scots acted systematically and successfully on the offensive. There was, however, no attempt made at a permanent conquest, the object of the attack being to win plunder and to bring such pressure to bear on the English as would induce them to acknowledge the independence of the northern country.

In July, 1315, Bruce advanced to the siege of Carlisle. Such an attack had been expected by the English for some time and the garrison had been strengthened to meet the emergency. The defending force, which was commanded by Sir Andrew de Harcla, comprised in all five knights, fifteen squires, seventy men-at-arms, thirty hobelers,¹ and over three hundred archers.² This force would, of course, be reinforced by the burghers. The garrison was well equipped with siege engines and towers,³ many of which had been constructed of material obtained from the demolition of sundry houses in the place.⁴ The vulnerable points of the defence were the three gates, the Caldew, Bokard, and Risard, and for the protection of these entrances special detachments of archers were assigned.

When the blockade had been established the Scots made daily and repeated assaults on the city gates. These proved unavailing and it became evident that the defences could not be rushed. The next step was to set up opposite the Caldew, or western,

¹For an explanation of this term see section 5.

²Bain, III, 403.

³Berfrays.

⁴Bain, III, 464.

western, /

gate a large machine by means of which huge stones were hurled against the entrance. This device failed because the battery of the attackers was completely overmatched by that of the defenders. Accordingly the Scots proceeded to bring forward a wooden tower, mounted on wheels, which was considerably higher than the wall. The garrison prepared towers to counter the hostile one, but this proved unnecessary as the attacking machine stuck in the wet ground by its own weight and could not be brought up to the walls.

The besiegers next proceeded to prepare a sow under cover of which they might mine the foot of the wall, but the obstacle of the moat proved too great to overcome and the fascines for filling and wheeled bridges for ^crossing this barrier proved equally useless. On the ninth day of the siege the Scots prepared a general assault with scaling ladders and resolved to repeat the practice which had gained them Edinburgh castle. While the greater part of their army made a noisy assault upon the city at the place of the Minorite friars, Douglas, with a body of picked men equipped with ladders, endeavoured to scale the wall on the west side. The ladders were planted under cover of a brisk archery fire but the watch was too well kept and the resistance too strong to permit of success. The ladders were cast down and the attackers withdrew after suffering heavily.

This was the last effort made by the Scots to secure the place. On August 1st, the eleventh ^{day} of the siege, they abandoned their engines and retreated to their own country with the garrison skirmishing in their rear. In this action to cover the retreat two Scottish knights were taken prisoners. / The lesson of the failure is that on hostile territory and swampy ground the surprise tactics of the Scots were in this case ineffective, while their attempt to divert the attention of the garrison by a feint was rendered useless by the employment of fixed detachments of

/. The chronicle of Lanercost, fo. 216b, makes the siege last ten days; Bain, III, 464, indicates a duration of twelve.

of/

defence at the danger points.

Section 2. Berwick and Myton-on-Swale.

The English garrison at Berwick had long been a thorn in the side of the Scots, though the activities of the English on the eastern border had been restrained by the victories of Douglas at Lintalee and Scaithmoor. On March 28th, 1318, the nuisance was removed by the betrayal of the town to Douglas by the earl of March and Peter Spalding. The garrison, however, held out bravely in the castle under the command of Sir Roger Horsley for a period of sixteen weeks before being compelled to capitulate for lack of food.¹

Even Edward II could not acquiesce quietly in the loss of the important border fortress and in the following year he ordered the muster of a force at Newcastle-on-Tyne for the purpose of retaking the stronghold. The army which assembled amounted to seven thousand foot, mostly English archers and Welshmen, and a thousand hobekers². Time was lost in preparation and in the march north and it was the beginning of September before the English approached the town. At the same time a fleet, provided by the Cinque Ports, sailed up the east coast with the double purpose of supplying the attackers with food and of blockading the town on the side of the North sea³. The position was defended by the burghers and a small garrison, the whole being commanded by Walter the Steward, who had the invaluable assistance of John Crabbe, a Flemish engineer, outlaw, and soldier of fortune.

The siege lasted from the 7th till the 24th of September and comprised a blockade, a series of skirmishes, and two great assaults. On the morning of the 7th the English advanced to the attack well equipped with ladders, scaffolding, pikes, and

¹ The Scalacronica, fo. 211; Bain, III, 607, demonstrates the length of the defence.

² Bain, III, 668.

³ V.E.S., p. 242.

and/

large shields to afford shelter. A covering body of archers was detached to keep up a harassing fire on the embrasures of the ramparts, and the attackers then rushed to the assault. Ladders were planted at various points and the besiegers swarmed up them, but were steadily met and repulsed, the ladders being successfully upset. The defenders were greatly troubled by the fire of the archers and by the fact that the wall was so low that the top of it was within spearthrust from the ground, but they held on gamely, ably directed and encouraged by Walter who rode round the line of defence with a small reserve giving help where it was required. By noon it was evident that the attack would fail and, as the tide was now full, the English tried a change of plan. A vessel was packed with men and towed by barges towards the wall on the side of the sea. The obstacle was to repeat the practice of the Crusaders in the assault upon Constantinople by "boarding" the wall by means of a gangway thrown out from the vessel, but it was defeated by the heavy fire of arrows and stones from the besieged, which prevented the ship approaching to close quarters. When the tide ebbed the vessel was left high and dry, and the Scots, making a sally by the water gate, seized and burned it before the English land force could come to the rescue. As evening approached the attackers withdrew baffled.

A quiet period of five days ensued, which was utilised by the English to construct several towers and a huge wooden sow securely covered against fire. To counter this action Crabbe saw to the making of a specially large mangonel, which was mounted on wheels so that it could be rapidly moved to the required spot. Late on the 13th/the English made a combined attack by land and sea, the ships on this occasion being equipped with fighting tops full of men. As the sow advanced,

/The hour of the assault would be regulated by the time of full tide.

advanced, /

Crabbe skilfully bracketed and finally smashed it with a few stones from his mangonel. Meanwhile the ship attack was repulsed by the Scottish engines on the sea wall. The land assault was pressed home and in places the defence began to wear thin. The Steward rode about with a hundred men-at-arms, dropping reinforcements here and there till he was left with a single attendant. As dusk approached, the English made a desperate rush on St. Mary's gate. The supports of the drawbridge were burned through so that the bridge fell, and the English then dashed across and tried to burn the gate itself. The crisis of the assault had arrived and the Steward, drawing from the castle his last reserve, himself took post at the gate and held the entrance successfully till darkness compelled the attackers to withdraw. Even the women and children had taken part in the defence by gathering the spent arrows and taking them to the men on the walls.²

Meanwhile Bruce had not been idle in arranging for the relief of the besieged town. He rejected the course of fighting a pitched battle and preferred to put into operation his usual strategy of drawing off the English by making a diversion elsewhere. With this object he dispatched Douglas and Randolph with several thousand men to raid the north of England.³ The foray was pushed home and the defenceless districts of the northern counties and of Yorkshire were harried as far as Ripon. At this point William de Melton, the archbishop of York, with several other clerics and a large mass of the townsmen and peasantry sallied out to meet the

1. Bracketing consists in a gunner throwing a shell beyond the target and then one short of it. The maximum and minimum ranges being thus ascertained, a gradual reduction of the one and increase of the other finally secures the hitting of the object. The simplicity of the method and its certainty can only be appreciated from the subjective point of view.

2. Barbour, Bk. XVII.

3. " and the chronicle of Meaux, p. 336, give fifteen thousand, the V.E.S., p. 242, ten. Both estimates are probably exaggerations.

the/

invaders. The force was of little military value and it was probably only the example of the Standard which induced such an action. But the Scottish raiders of the twelfth and of the fourteenth centuries were two very different propositions. At Myton-on-Swale on September 20th the hostile forces came into collision. The English advanced to attack the Scots, but when the opposing forces got within a few yards of each other the undisciplined northern levies collapsed and fled in confusion. Without suffering any loss to speak of the Scots destroyed over a thousand of the enemy, including a large number of clerics, while many more were drowned in attempting to cross the Swale. Douglas and Randolph then resumed their ravaging, which they carried as far as the neighbourhood of Pontefract. /.

In a few days the news of the disaster in Yorkshire reached the English camp outside Berwick. The knowledge that a strong hostile force was successfully established in the heart of their territory ^{caused} consternation in the English camp, and the lords of the threatened lands were naturally anxious to retreat. Counsels on the subject were divided, But on the advice of the earl of Lancaster it was finally decided to raise the siege and to attempt to intercept the retreat of the raiders. In this the English probably made a mistake, but their action was exactly that anticipated by Bruce, who had once more accurately summed up his enemy's weaknesses. The attempt at interception was unsuccessful as the Scottish raiders retreated by the western districts and

/ The Scots, according to the Lanercost chronicle, fo. 218, had dismounted and formed a schiltrons, while the English were in very bad order. When the English fled the Scots mounted for the pursuit.

2 Barbour, Bk. XVII; V.E.S., pp. 242-244; the chronicle of Meaux, pp. 336-337; the Bridlington chronicle, pp. 57-58. It is noticeable that the chronicler of Meaux puts the English loss at a higher figure than does Barbour.

and/

reentered Scotland near Gretna./.

Section 3. The surprise at Byland.

In the early summer of 1322 the Scots made a raid on a large scale into the north and west of England, and penetrated into the heart of Lancashire, destroying the towns of Lancaster and Preston. Stung into activity by this inroad Edward II summoned a large force¹ and invaded Scotland at the beginning of August. Bruce had the peasants drive off their stock and leave Bothian destitute of food, so that the English had to depend upon their fleet for supplies. Meanwhile Bruce kept the main body of the Scots at Culross north of the Forth to observe the English advance. The invaders penetrated as far as Edinburgh and lay there for some time, but as contrary winds held up their supply ships they suffered severely from hunger. Eventually a retreat was ordered by Melrose, but this march through difficult ground was stopped by the destruction of a large detachment by Douglas. After this reverse the English confined their retreat to the coastal plain and reentered England at the beginning of September, having lost many men through famine and dysentery.²

Bruce followed up the retreat, which was continued into Yorkshire. The Scots were fresh and well supplied, while the English troops were by this time worn out and disorganised by privation. Bruce detached a small party to observe Norham castle, while the bulk of the Scottish force penetrated England by the west and pushed on rapidly towards the English. On October 14th³ the main body of the English army was in position on a rocky hill near Byland abbey, while the king himself with his treasure and plate

X

¹The Bridlington chronicle, p. 58; I take "Gratrehals" to signify Gretna; the chronicle of Lanercost, fo. 218, distinctly ~~re~~ states that the Scots retreated by the west.

²The infantry numbered eight thousand--Bain, III, 765.

³Barbour, Bk. XVIII; the chronicle of Meaux, p. 345; the chronicle of Lanercost, fo. 219b.

⁴Bain, III, 791; the chronicle of Meaux.

plate/

lay at the abbey of Rievaulx. The only approach to the English position was through a rocky and wooded glen which was closely guarded by a force under Sir Thomas Ughtred and Sir Ralph Cobham. Bruce detailed Douglas and Randolph to make an attack on this pass. The Scots pushed fiercely forward and ~~were~~ met by a stubborn ~~resistance~~ resistance, the English hurling large stones at them. While this assault was going on, a force of lightly-equipped Highlanders made a detour and clambered up the hill at an unprotected point. The ascent, difficult though it was, was successfully accomplished and the climbers found themselves above the English. Pressed by the attack in front and by the light troops in rear the defenders broke and fled. The Scots pursued briskly and a headlong flight followed, in which Edward took part. The earl of Richmond and Sir Henry de Sully, a Frenchman, were captured, and a large plunder, including the royal treasure, was secured by the Scots. The pursuit was pushed by the Steward as far as the gates of York, while the remainder of the Scots ravaged eastern Yorkshire as far as Beverley and retired at their leisure./.

The almost contemptuous ease with which the English invasion was repulsed marks the very highest development of the Scottish defensive strategy. Against such a course of action the English attack had no hope of success, and retreat, after a short sojourn in the hostile country, became imperative. If a longer stay had been made the invaders would have found their graves in the region they had occupied. Bruce carefully abstained from striking a decisive blow until the English were dispirited and thrown off their guard. His action at Byland resembles in outline Randolph's capture of Edinburgh castle. Exception may be taken to it on the ground that the Scots were guilty of dividing their forces in face of the enemy, but so completely had the English lost the initiative at this period that the risk of any disaster to

/Barbour, Bk. XVIII; the chronicle of Meaux, p. 346; the chronicle of Lanercost, fo. 219b; the Bridlington chronicle, p. 79.

to/
the Scots was small.

Section 4. The Weardale campaign.

Early in June, 1322,¹ the Scots broke the existing truce with the English and crossed the border several thousand strong under the command of Douglas, Randolph, and Donald, earl of Mar. Bruce was in Ireland and could not take part in the campaign.² The raiders, essentially a mobile force, easily eluded the English border garrisons, and pushed their ravages as far as Weardale, where they formed a variety of base from which they could make forays on the surrounding country.

Edward III, unlike his father, was by no means inclined to look on at this devastation of his territory. On hearing news of the Scottish attack he ordered an assembly at York, where there met a force much larger than that of the Scots, but, by reason of its heavy equipment and train of baggage, not nearly so well adapted for operations in rough country. There was present an alien force under Sir John of Hainault, and more than one broil arose between this element and the English archers. From the assembly point this powerful force marched north to defeat the raiders, but, as soon appeared, the difficulty was to find them. Although the movements which followed were carried out on English ground, it is evident that throughout the campaign the Scots were fully aware of the position of their opponents and manoeuvred accordingly, while the English were more or less in the dark as to the whereabouts of the raiders.

For two days the English toiled on,³ their sole guiding marks being the fires left by the ravagers. On the third day, under the delusion that the Scots were attempting to retreat, Edward ordered the abandonment of most of the baggage and made a

¹ Bain, III, 918.

² " , 922.

³ Froissart, Ch. 18, states that the English were in three divisions of foot, each having two wings of cavalry.

a/

forced march to Haydon Bridge, on the Tyne near Hexham¹. Here he remained with his troops for several days,² suffering great hardship from wet weather and lack of supplies. As the Scots showed no signs of appearing, Edward finally dispatched scouts with the promise of a liberal reward to anyone who would bring him in reliable information of the position of the enemy. The English recrossed the Tyne at Haltwhistle on July 28th³ and soon afterwards were met by Thomas de Rokeby, who brought news that the Scots were camped in Stanhope Park, on the banks of the Wear near Durham.

The English had now succeeded in locating their enemy, but any prospect of a decisive fight appeared as far off as ever. The Scottish front was covered by the river, at this point rapid and stony, a fact which precluded any serious attempt at an attack. A challenge was sent to them to descend and fight on fair ground, but it fell on deaf ears. Similarly an attempt to draw them into battle by teasing them with archery only resulted in some loss to the English skirmishers. Douglas was not, however, quite satisfied with his position, and shortly after the arrival of the English he carried out a night movement of his troops to another area some two miles distant, where the front was still covered by the river, while to the rear stretched a broad moss. The English promptly conformed to this manoeuvre, and for the best part of a month the two forces faced each other. The circumstances were by no means similar in both camps. The Scots were living in the midst of rude plenty on the spoils of the devastated country, while the English suffered greatly from want of food.

On one of the first nights⁴ of this stalemate Douglas

¹Froissart, Ch. 18; Bain, III, 925.

²Anything from four to eight.

³Bain, III, 927, 928.

⁴All the authorities except Barbour indicate that it was early in the period. Probably the raid occurred between the 3rd and the 5th of August.

Douglas/

carried out a daring attack. With some hundreds/ of picked men he broke into the English camp at night and created immense confusion. Certain of his men had been detailed to cut the guyropes of the tents, while the others stabbed the struggling figures beneath the canvas.² Douglas himself penetrated as far as the king's tent and narrowly failed in seizing Edward. As soon as the English began to recover from their alarm the Scots fell back, while Douglas coolly covered the retreat.

Some of the Scots, including Randolph, were encouraged by this success to the point of desiring a battle, but Douglas restrained them and set about preparations for a retreat. This was carried out some time later in masterly fashion. The Scottish camp was lighted by fires, as was usual at night, and a certain stir caused the English to think that another attack was being prepared. Part of their army stood to their arms all night awaiting the assault, only to find in the morning that the Scots had quietly decamped, leaving nothing of value behind them. They had crossed the moss by leading their horses and were several miles off by dawn. The English army was in no state to make a forced march in pursuit, and operations were accordingly broken off.³

The Weardale campaign speaks for itself. Without risking an action the Scots wrecked Edward's army as effectively as if they had won a battle, and had probably lost less than a hundred men in doing so. Their force, in fact, was not intended for fighting. Its chief asset was mobility, a quality which it possessed to an extent never equalled by a Scottish army before or since. Properly handled in suitable country such a force was safe

¹ Froissart says two, Barbour five.

² The whole business bears a startling resemblance to some of the nocturnal raids of the hill tribes of northern India on British camps.

³ Froissart, CH. 15-18; the chronicle of Lanercost, fo. 222; the Scalacronica, fo. 214-214b; the exact dates are apparently impossible to ascertain.

safe/

from a heavily equipped enemy, and in this case the handling was above reproach. Douglas, in a word, gives the impression of having played with the English, while doing them all the damage he could. Unfortunately for Scotland, leaders of his calibre are infrequent phenomena.

Section 5. A new arm.

In the strict military sense a nobeler was a lightly equipped man-at-arms mounted, for the sake of mobility, on a horse of moderate size and weight./As applied to the Scots, however, it rather signifies the men who have attained immortality in the pages of Froissart. He describes them as spearmen, mounted on light ponies, and carrying only a bag of oatmeal and a girdle on which to bake cakes. For meat they used the flesh of captured cattle seathed in their own skins; the same cattle provided them with rough shoes. Spits for roasting flesh could, of course, be easily manufactured out of branches of trees. The raiders thus "made war support war."

The appearance of such a force with its tremendous mobility and raiding power would hardly cause surprise in the case of the Cossacks of Russia, but it is a trifle unexpected in the case of the Scots. It is the particular contribution of the borderers to the science of warfare in Scotland, a product of the circumstances which demanded an efficient raiding organisation. It was rapidly adopted by the English, and the nobelers of the 14th century developed into the mosstroopers of later days. With the possible exception of Bannockburn it never was, however, worked into the organisation of the army as a profitable division in battle and, as will be seen in the case of Flodden, the presence of such a body could be at times a nuisance to its own side.

Bruce had solved the problem of extorting a favourable peace from the English with the minimum of risk. Once the English were expelled from Scotland itself pitched battles

/ A "hobby" in the old English phrase.

battles/

became needless adventures and were accordingly avoided. The necessary pressure was brought to bear on the English by a strategy which, for the most part, kept the war away from Scottish territory and made it profitable to the Scots themselves. Attack was once more proved to be the best means of defence. It must be admitted that the war could not proceed indefinitely, but so great was the predominance of the Scots at this time that it is difficult to see what advantage the peace of Northampton gave to the northern country except the theoretical recognition of her independence. In return for this England gained a respite during which her military forces could be reorganised and a better system of warfare adopted.

Chapter IX.

Dupplin Moor.

Section 1. Opening of the campaign.

The expulsion of the English from Scotland had resulted in the presence in the southern kingdom of numerous exiles, mainly of noble rank, who had adhered to the defeated side in the war of Independence. These nobles had forfeited their lands north of the Tweed, but by the treaty of Northampton some provision was made for restitution in the case of certain of them. The death of Bruce delayed the fulfilment of the pledges given in 1328 and during the regency of Randolph complications arose which led to further disputes. The Disinherited, thoroughly dissatisfied with the treatment which they were receiving, appealed for help to Edward II as one of the parties to the treaty, and declared their intention of trying to recover their lost lands by force of arms if other means should fail. Edward declined to afford them assistance and they accordingly took matters into their own hands. Randolph was aware of the approaching attack and had made some preparations to meet it, but, unfortunately for his country, he died before the campaign commenced. The Scots were thus bereft of the last of their outstanding generals and were reduced to appoint as regent Donald, earl of Mar, a man of little experience in Scottish warfare. Divisions, caused by fear of treachery, were rife in the northern ranks, and the regent himself was not immune from being suspected of sympathy with the Disinherited.

On July 31st the Disinherited sailed from Ravenspur and Kingston-upon-Hull to commence their attack. This course was taken to evade the prohibition which Edward had laid upon their crossing the borders, which were under the jurisdiction of his wardens. The force which embarked was necessarily small, being composed of four or five hundred men-at-arms and between a thousand

/The Bridlington chronicle, p. 103; the chronicle of Meaux, p. 362.

thousand/

and fifteen ^{HUNDRED} archers. As was inevitable under the circumstances, the troops were either volunteers, personal followers of the barons concerned, or mercenaries; no regular levy could be held for the purpose of carrying out so unofficial an expedition. Chief among the leaders were Gilbert Umfraville, David of Strathbogie, Henry de Beaumont, claimants respectively to the earldoms of Angus, Athole, and Buchan, Edward Baliol, and the Netherlander soldier of fortune, Walter Manny.

After a stormy voyage of six days' duration the fleet arrived at Kinghorn in Fife, where the expeditionary force disembarked on August 6th.² The unusual mode of the English attack had rendered the Scots unable to concentrate at the point of invasion, as such point could not be ascertained, but various bodies were disposed on the threatened coasts. As the English force was disembarking it was attacked by one of these bodies under the earl of Fife. Only the archers and the foot had reached the shore, and the men-at-arms, still on board, could take no part in the action, but a brisk discharge of arrows was enough to defeat this local attack.³ In this action the Scots suffered some considerable loss, including Alexander Seton.

After completing the disembarkation and resting their forces, the Disinherited proceeded to Dunfermline, where they captured a store of iron pike heads,⁴ apparently part of the preparation made by Randolph towards meeting the invasion, and a

¹ The authorities are remarkably unanimous on the point of numbers, as their estimates all fall between fifteen and twenty-one hundred. V.E.S., p.291; Meaux chronicle, p.362; the Lanercost chronicle, fo. 225b.

² The Bridlington chronicle, p.104.

³ This fact in itself shows the absurdity of the estimates of Fife's force. The Bridlington chronicle, p.104, gives twenty-three thousand, that of Meaux, p.363, fourteen, while the Lanercost chronicle is comparatively reasonable with four.

⁴ The Scalacronica, fo.216b.

a/

supply of food./ A further interval for rest and reorganisation followed and then, on August 11th, the invaders marched north through Fife to the south bank of the river Earn. There they halted temporarily on the Halyhill near the outskirts of Forteviot. In front of them was the reach of the Earn between that river and Forgandenny with the ground rising sharply on the opposite bank in a rough and bare spur, on the crest of which stands the present Dupplin castle.

The river could be crossed by either bridge or ford, and the Scottish knights and men-at-arms had been ~~guards~~ posted by Mar to guard the bridge, which seemed the more probable avenue of approach. On the north of the stream near the ford lay the camp of the light troops and followers of the army with the baggage. The English, who were perfectly cognisant of the alternative means of crossing, determined to fall upon the rear of the Scots in the darkness after fording the Earn. This operation was successfully carried out and the invaders cut a swathe through the camp of the Scottish footmen. The raiders, who caused tremendous damage, carried straight on till they had occupied the high ground of the spur. Thus, when day came, the Scots heavy force found their camp nearly destroyed and the enemy in position on the slope above the scene of the night attack./

Section 2. The battle.

The English position was not a strong one in which to resist the attack of an army which, ^{despite the} dispersal of its light troops, must still have mustered over ten thousand men. The slope in front was fairly steep, but comparatively bare of natural obstacles, and

1. The Meaux chronicle, p. 363.

2. The Bridlington chronicle, p. 106, states that the Scots kept to the bridge thinking that the English would be ignorant of the existence of a ford.

3. The Lanercost chronicle, fo. 223b; the Bridlington chronicle, p. 105; the Meaux chronicle, p. 363; the Scalacronica, fo. 217.

and/

except for a small stream on the left wing the flanks of the defending force were entirely in the air. This circumstance and the necessity of covering as much ground with their front as possible induced the English to adopt a formation which presented a novel problem to the Scots. The barons and men-at-arms dismounted and formed a mass in the centre, while the archers were extended to either flank in long lines slightly advanced at the extreme wings./

The regent arranged the Scots in three columns. The central one contained the great bulk of the force, while the two exterior units were little more than flankers. In this formation the Scots charged up the slope, the main column making straight for the clump of heavily armed men in the English centre. The rush was deprived of a great deal of its initial impetus by the steepness of the slope which had to be surmounted and by the heavy fire of the English archers. Thus the energy of the assault was somewhat lessened by the time that the attackers reached their objective, but it was still great enough to bear back the English men-at-arms for several yards, some of them being trampled under foot in the crush. But the absence of horses which could be stabbed and the presence of men in heavy armour rendered the thrust of the spears less effective than usual in clearing a space. As a result the footmen in both bodies became wedged in a mass so tight that to strike a blow became impossible. At this stage the stratagem of Stafford in ordering his men to turn their shoulders to the Scots and push was effective in checking any further advance.

Meanwhile the English archers had poured such a shower of arrows on the flanking columns that these detachments had recoiled into the main body. As the flankers fell back the archers pressed forward and were soon firing at close range into the sides of the mass, which was by this time hopelessly jammed and quite incapable of resistance. For some short interval the Scots still held their

/The Meaux chronicle, p. 364.

their/

ground in a constantly contracting area, but at length the rear of the column dissolved into flight. The head and centre had perished almost to a man, those on the outskirts slain by the arrows and those in the centre suffocated by the press and lying in a heap several feet in depth. Henry de Beaumont and several of his followers mounted immediately and carried out a pursuit which proved fatal to many more of the fugitives. The Scots had lost thousands of men, including the regent and many of the barons, while the number of the English fallen did not reach forty, most of whom had been killed in the first rush. The archers escaped unscathed.¹

Section 3. New problems.

The errors committed by the earl of Mar are so obvious that criticism is almost superfluous. It is, however, worth while considering what steps he might have taken to deal with the situation.

The English formation was a novel one, though it bears some slight resemblance to that of the barons and the fyrd at the battle of the Standard, but it possessed, of course, a missile power much greater than that of the northern levy of the twelfth century. Dupplin Moor provides the first example of the effective combination of archers and dismounted men-at-arms employed on the defensive, a practice which became the rule in the Hundred Years' War. The point of difference between the battle of Dupplin Moor and certain of those of the French wars is that in the former combat the Scots fought on foot.

The unusual nature of the English invasion made it impossible for the Scots to employ their usual tactics of harassing the enemy by stripping the country of all food supplies, as the point of entry could not be ascertained beforehand. In this respect

¹The Bridlington chronicle, pp. 106-107; the Lanercost chronicle, fo. 224; the Meaux chronicle, pp. 364-365; the Scalacronica, fo. 217; Knighton, pp. 106-107.

respect/

the smallness of the English force was a distinct advantage to the attackers as it enabled them to make a purely maritime invasion and thus rendered void the customary perils of the Berwick route. An additional advantage reaped by the Disinherited from their paucity of numbers was that their force could be fed from the resources of the country and thus could dispense with a base and a line of communications. But it may well be asked what Mar was doing while the invaders were proceeding across Fife in such leisurely fashion. His concentration may not have been complete on the date of the landing, but he must even then have had a considerable number of troops in hand. If he had disposed these in a strong position across the line of advance or flung them in a cloud round the outskirts of the English force, he could have compelled the invaders to turn back or to fight an offensive action in which the Scots would have had the advantage of the ground and could have employed their favourite battle tactics. His actual position on the Earn was quite a good one, as it offered only two points of approach, but nothing can be said in defence of the generalship which concentrated the strength of the army at the bridge and left the other section, weak and leaderless, to guard the easier route. The Scottish army was exposed to and eventually suffered a defeat in detail. Certainly the mass of foot which was so severely handled on the eve of the battle seems to have possessed no rallying or manoeuvring power at all.

The same lack of ability to manoeuvre is very apparent in the main combat. It is clear that the Scottish attack was not carried out by a schiltrons, but by a column whose depth greatly exceeded its front. In this fashion the Scots threw away the great advantage which is usually possessed by the force superior in numbers, the ability to threaten the flanks of the enemy. By the use of the column the great mass of the Scottish troops was so disposed that it could not come into action at all. As a result it was the jam at the head of the column and not the actual blows and shafts of the English that destroyed the attacking force.

Almost any other course of action would have been more successful. A refusal to fight at all would have been temporarily

temporarily/

discouraging, but in the long run it would have compelled the English to take some decisive action, as they could not have wandered about the country indefinitely. If this is set aside on the grounds of Mar's fear of treachery in his own host and because of his determination to strike at once, there still remain two alternatives to the method actually employed. An attack in open order might, and probably would, have resulted in serious loss to the Scots, but it would have allowed their whole force to participate in the fighting and would have led to a threat to the English flanks. Again, a slow and steady advance in schiltrons formation, preferably attended by small bodies of cavalry in the rear, would presumably have enabled the Scots to reach the English front at several points, and there is no indication that the thin line of archers could have withstood the shock as did the dismounted knights and men-at-arms. In either case the Scottish army, even if repulsed, would have remained an army and would have escaped total destruction.

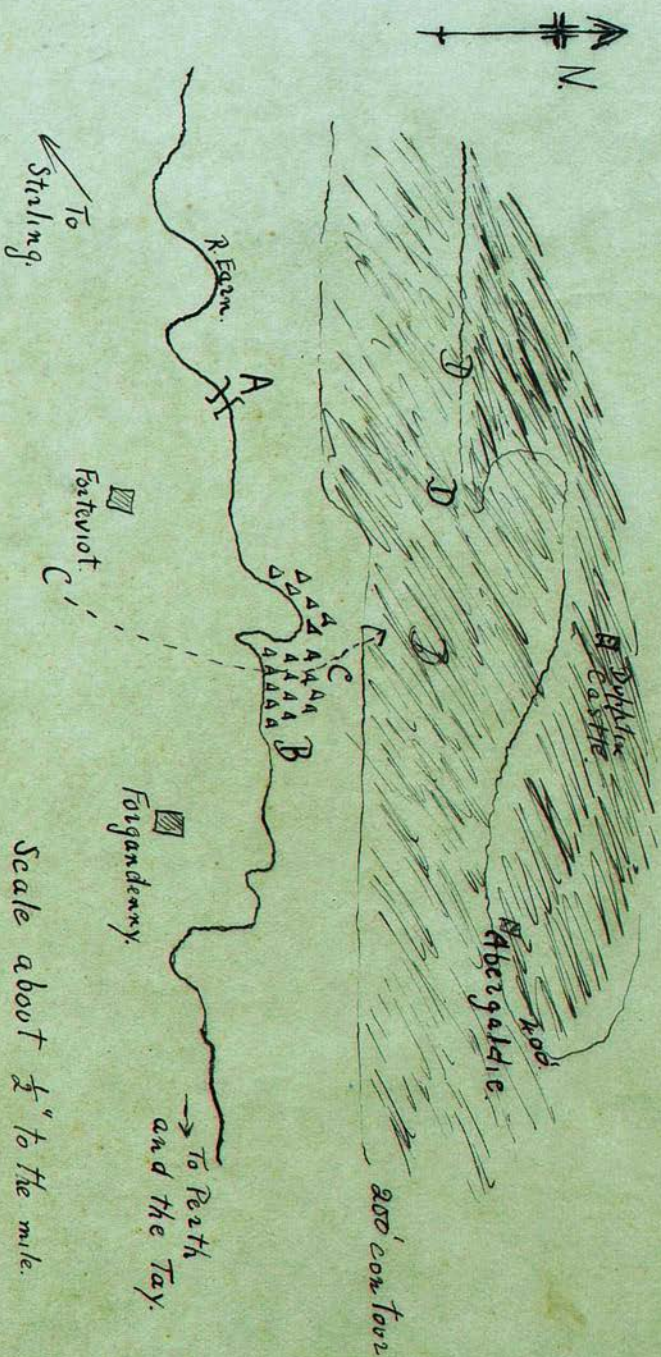
The battle is a distinct disappointment. Mar stood passively on the defensive when he should have acted briskly, and attacked with blind fury when he should have behaved warily. Up to this stage it may be said that Scottish strategy and tactics had shown a steady advance, which had resulted in their obtaining a definite superiority over their southern enemies. But Dupplin Moor shows a return to the rash action of the days of Dunbar. Doubtless the defeat was partly due to the unusual tactics of the English, and, very largely, to overconfidence on the part of the Scots. The bare idea that such a body as Mar's army could possibly be defeated by the handful of men opposed to it would be scoffed at as absurd, had it not been proved true by the event. To that extent the rashness of the attackers may be excused, but it is evident that there was another factor at work on the side of the Scots.

Any reader of Scottish history will have noticed that throughout the history of the northern country the part played by the barons and knights has been frequently a sinister one and that their policy has been more often dictated by selfish than by patriotic motives. This was especially the case in the earlier days of the war

war/

of Independence. Wallace never had the opportunity of relying on the support of the higher ranks; he was essentially a man of the people and ~~by~~ the people he stood and fell. Bruce, on the other hand, could, and occasionally did, have had the help of a large section of the aristocracy, but it is noticeable that he did not depend on it. His successes were won by the masses of the commons ably directed by himself or by one of his small band of clever lieutenants. The Scottish army at Dupplin was essentially, however, an army of the barons and knights who had, apparently in the majority of cases, learned little or nothing of the Scottish system of fighting. In a land quarrel, such as this was, they were ready to bear even more than their fair share of the danger, as is shown by the tremendous loss they sustained in the battle, but their interference and, in this case evidently, their dictation in the management of the Scottish host was disastrous to the wellfare of the country. It is a safe surmise that Randolph or Douglas with a half of the Scottish army of Bannockburn would have accomplished what was beyond the power of Donald of Mar with all his bannered host. Unfortunately the reactionary military influence of the aristocracy was not limited in its operation to this particular campaign.

Sketch Map to illustrate the Duppelin Moor Battle.



Scale about $\frac{1}{2}$ " to the mile.

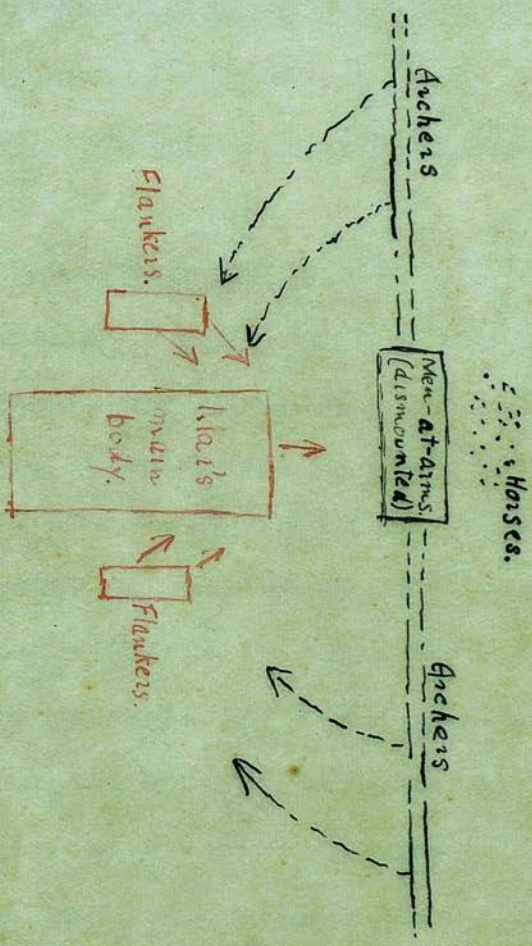
A---- Maie's heavy troops.

B---- Camp of Scottish foot.

C--- Balliol's night march.

D--- Disinherited Battle line.

The Scottish Attack.



Disinherited in black.
Scots in red.

Chapter X.

Halidon Hill.

Section 1. The expulsion of Baliol.

After the victory at Dupplin the Disinherited, well aware that with their small force their position in the midst of a hostile people was very insecure, cast about them for a base of operations. With this end in view they occupied Perth and partially restored the ruined defences with wooden palisades. Within a short time they were blockaded in their new position by a large force. The siege, however, only lasted for a few days and was then raised.²

Baliol, now crowned king at Scone, did some marauding in the surrounding districts, but he and his followers were soon drawn south by the news that the hereditary lands of the Comyn family in Galloway were being attacked by the Scottish leaders. The inherent weakness of the Disinherited now showed itself. Having won a certain amount of success in their land struggle, certain of Baliol's chief lieutenants began to further their own interests and so greatly weakened the central force. This was no more than Baliol could expect when he allowed his own movements to be dictated by territorial motives. The earl of Fife, who had joined the Disinherited, was left to hold Perth, but the place was soon recaptured by the Scots.³

Baliol proceeded with his immediate followers to the

¹The walls had been thrown down by Bruce after his surprise.

²The reasons given are various. The Lanercost chronicler asserts that it was due to a rising of Baliol's partisans in Galloway; the Scalacronica that there was a shortage of food in the camp of the besiegers; the chronicles of Meaux and Bridlington that the Scots were disappointed by the defeat at Kinghorn of a fleet with reinforcements that John Crabbe was bringing from Berwick. Probably all these arguments are sound.

³The chronicle of Lanercost, fo. 224b.

the/

border districts and, after an amount of skirmishing with the Scots under Archibald Douglas, took up position at Roxburgh. The main body of the troops was separated by the river Teviot from their leader, who had taken up his quarters at Kelso Abbey, and Sir Andrew Moray and Douglas took advantage of this disposition of affairs to attempt to seize the bridge in order to cut the invading force into two portions. The attack was at first successful and the bridge was partly broken down, but it was ultimately repulsed by the obstinate resistance of Thomas Ughtred and the bridge guard which gave Baliol and his followers time to arm, and the Scots suffered some loss including Moray and Crabbe, who were taken prisoners.

The Disinherited next proceeded to Annan where they stayed for some time. On December 16th Douglas led a night attack on the town. Baliol and his followers were taken by surprise and could offer little effective resistance. With a handful of followers the leader succeeded in escaping over the border, but over a hundred of his adherents, including Walter Comyn and Henry Baliol, were slain./

It is evident that the invaders, despite their victories in the field, held little outside their own camp. The effect of the battle of Dupplin Moor was in fact almost paradoxical. It resulted in a popular, as opposed to a baronial, rising, which, as was usual in Scotland, provided a much more effective resistance, and it initiated the weakening process in Baliol's army, which proceeded progressively until the final rout at Annan. The defeats of the Scots were unfortunate incidents which might well have been avoided, but it is clear that Baliol's unsupported force carried in it the seeds of its own decay and that such a filibustering expedition could have little hope of success unless it managed to attach to its side a large section

/The Scalacronica, fo. 217b; the Lanercost chronicle, fo. 224b; the Bridlington chronicle, pp. 107-110; the chronicle of Meaux, pp. 365-366.

section/

of the people. In the face of harassing guerilla attacks it ~~name~~ became helpless, possibly largely through exhaustion.

Section 2. The attack on Berwick.

In the month following their expulsion from Scotland the Disinherited again appealed to Edward III for help. On this occasion, whether through anger at the passing of the border by Scottish marauders or through desire to secure Berwick and the border counties, the English king acceded to their request and provided Edward Baliol with a strong force with which to undertake the siege of Berwick. The blockade of the place was soon established and the besiegers proceeded to construct engines for the attack, but for some time no real progress was made towards bringing the garrison to terms. On March 23rd the Scots raided the western border in an attempt to divert the attention of the English from Berwick, but the feint failed and the raiders were roughly handled by Anthony de Lucy, governor of Carlisle./

After Easter Edward III himself joined in the attack with a large reinforcement. The siege was now actively pushed and the town was assaulted with engines on all sides. The English ships cooperated in the attack and an attempt by the Scots to burn them only resulted in a conflagration in the town itself.² So severe became the pressure and the shortage of supplies³ that the warden, Alexander Seton, was compelled to make a truce by which he agreed to surrender the place if it were not relieved before the expiration of a period of fifteen days.⁴

On July 11th, just before the truce was due to terminate a large Scottish force forded⁵ the Tweed above the town and marched downstream on the south bank as far as Tweedmouth. The

1. The Bridlington chronicle, pp. 110-111.

2. "With bitumen". Was it some variety of the Greek fire?

3. And especially, according to the Meaux chronicle, p. 368, of water, as the supply pipes had been cut by the English.

4. The Scalacronica, fo. 218b; the Bridlington chronicle, pp. 111-112.

5. The Scalacronica, fo. 218b.

The/

English expected an attack on their works, but as evening approached it was found that the object of the Scots was to throw a body of horse into the town. These troopers, to the number of two hundred, got across the shallow flats at the mouth of the Tweed and made their way to the sea gate of the town. Certain of them were intercepted and captured or killed by William de Montacute, but the others succeeded in effecting an entry. Meanwhile the main body of the Scots turned south and proceeded into Northumberland to ravage the country./

On the day following these incidents the truce expired and Edward demanded the surrender of the town. The garrison, however, claimed that a technical relief had been achieved by the entry of the horsemen and refused to admit the English. So infuriated was Edward that he had Seton's son, one of the twelve hostages given by the townsmen as a pledge that the truce would be observed, hung. A new arrangement was made by which the immunity of the town was to be extended for a few more days and six more hostages were given by the garrison.² Edward did not repeat his previous mistakes, but defined a relief as the entry, during daylight, of two hundred horsemen without the loss of ten or more of their number. Three Scottish knights, chief of whom was William Keith, were allowed to pass the English lines in order to carry news of the arrangement to the field army of the Scots. This body they found at Witton.³ Keith explained to the leaders the condition of Berwick and pointed out that further defence had become impossible unless the town were relieved before the termination of the truce. His representations had the effect he desired, and the Scottish main body moved north to attempt the

¹The Bridlington chronicle, pp. 112-113; the Meaux chronicle, p. 369.

²It is only fair to say that Edward was in the wrong. The dispute arose over the fact that an accurate definition of what constituted a relief had not been made when the truce was arranged. This was Edward's own fault.

³A few miles north-west of Morpeth.

the/

rescue of the town./

Section 3. The battle.

The Scottish army, which numbered approximately fifteen thousand with the footmen as usual predominant in numbers², crossed the Tweed some distance inland and then turned eastward to attack the English. Edward's force was probably slightly smaller than that of the Scots³ and was further weakened by the necessity of leaving a detachment of five hundred men-at-arms and archers to prevent the garrison of Berwick from making a sally in the English rear while the battle was proceeding. A further body of two hundred picked men was sent to combat the expected attempt of an equal number of the Scots to relieve^x Berwick on the side of the sea in accordance with the conditions of the truce.⁴

There were available to the Scots two lines of approach to Berwick, by the coast and by the north bank of the Tweed. Situated in the angle between these converging lines and, by its unbroken ground and open slopes, commanding both, was Halidon Hill. Here Edward took up a position which had obvious advantages. As any attempt to pass the hill and proceed to Berwick would lay open their flank to an English attack, the Scots were reduced to a direct assault upon the position by climbing the steep slopes of the hill.⁵ Such an assault could be made from the south, where the slope is gentlest, the west, or the north-west, but the flanking movement was negatived by the fact that a long detour by the Scots could be countered by a comparatively slight movement of the English round the brow of the hill. Attack from the south was risky as the advancing force would have the Tweed in its rear, while an assault from the west would be hindered by

¹The Scalacronica, fo. 218b; the Bridlington chronicle, p. 113.

²See Lord Hailes, Annals, 1333, App. No. xii.

³No exact numbers are available.

⁴The Bridlington chronicle, p. 114.

⁵Even to the unencumbered and unhurried pedestrian the ascent is very noticeable.

by/

the necessity of crossing the Whiteadder at the foot of the slope. Accordingly it was from the north-west, or Foulden, that the Scots delivered their attack.¹

The English army was disposed by the king in three divisions under the command, from right to left, of the Marshal Norfolk, the king himself, and Edward Baliol. The formation of the right division is typical of the other two also. It consisted of a block of knights and men-at-arms under the command of John of Eltham, Henry de Beaumont, and Edward de Bohun, with two wings of archers, the right led by David of Athole² and the left by Gilbert de Umfraville. The whole defending force was dismounted,³ but the horses were kept within easy reach. The Scots like their opponents, were arranged in three divisions, with their best troops in the left section, as success seemed most probable in that direction. Some of them, at least, wore shirts over their armour as distinguishing marks.⁴

The day was already far spent when the Scots in their three schiltrons moved down the facing hill and struggled through the soft ground at the foot of Halidon. This task accomplished, they began the escalade of the English slope with vigour, but the steady shower of arrows which drove down upon them caused heavy losses and threw the ranks of the attackers into confusion.

/I am moved to this conclusion by three facts. a. The Scots advanced from an eminence facing Halidon, i.e. the high ground round Lamber-ton. b. There is no mention of a stream, but only of a marsh. c. Proximity to the sea is indicated by a reference in the Bridlington chronicle, p. 116, to the fate of some of the Scots in the flight.--"praeter illos qui versus mare semetipsos ab alto praecipitabant!" In a visit to Berwick and the neighbourhood I was unable to secure any information as to "Hevyside", the locality specifically named by the Bridlington chronicler.
²Expressly stated by the Bridlington chronicler to be that "next the sea".

³Baker of Swinbrook, p. 51. ⁴The Meaux chronicle, p. 370.

confusion./

The right and centre divisions pushed up a little way towards their opponents, but, wearied by the climb and ~~finding~~ no cover from the pitiless rain of missiles, eventually dissolved into flight. Edward and many of his knights immediately mounted and engaged in a pursuit, which was pushed for several miles and which resulted in the destruction of most of the fugitives. The Scottish left, however, advanced with more resolution and actually got to grips with Norfolk's division. But while this measure of success was achieved, the impetus was so far spent that the English had no difficulty in throwing off the attack. This section of the Scots was also punished severely in its retreat. The regent, Archibald Douglas, several earls, and most of the prominent men in the Scottish host were left dead on the field, and with them, in the fight and the pursuit, perished the great majority of the Scottish host. The English loss was infinitesimal, thanks to the inability of the attackers to get to close quarters. Berwick surrendered on the following day./

Section 4. The schiltrons on the offensive.

The tactics employed by the Scots in this battle would probably have been successful at Dupplin, where the number of their opponents was small. But Edward III at Halidon had a force of archers sufficiently strong to allow him to develop in security the formation which had won the Disinherited their sensational victory of the previous year. It is at once demonstrated that the schiltrons, although capable of a short quick charge on fair ground, was unsuited by its unwieldy nature for a long advance over natural obstacles in the face of a heavy archery fire. An attack in extended order was also rendered out of the question by the superiority of the English mounted force, which could have crushed its way through open ranks.

As the Scots could not attack with any prospects of

/ The Bridlington chronicle, p. 116; the Meaux chronicle, p. 370; V.E.S., p. 291.

of/

success in either open or close order, it is clear that they should not have engaged at all, and for this reason Douglas must bear the responsibility for the disaster sustained. It is easy to sympathise with the desperate anxiety of the Scots to save Berwick from the English, but that anxiety does not constitute an excuse for an attack on such an ideal defensive position as Halidon Hill. To lose the border fortress of Scotland was a severe enough loss without throwing away the Scottish field army with it. The whole campaign was a repetition of the fundamental blunder in theory, previously committed in 1296, that a field force is intended to be a support to a fortress, the truth being, of course, the exact opposite. If Douglas had kept his ground near Morpeth, Edward would certainly have occupied Berwick, but he would have hardly undertaken a prolonged invasion of Scotland with so strong a hostile force in his rear. Berwick was only Berwick, but the force which perished at Halidon was the mobile stronghold of the whole of Scotland, not to be risked except in the most favourable circumstances.

The handling of the Scottish troops in the battle itself was puerile. Douglas conformed to his enemy's dispositions instead of making his own. The attackers should have been arranged in two weak divisions on the right and centre, a strong force on the left, and a heavy reserve. Holding attacks by the weaker sections would have distracted the attention of part of the defenders, while the main Scottish attack would have been poured with greatly increased weight on the most accessible part of the English position. It is unlikely that a victory would have been won by such means, but a way might have been temporarily opened to the besieged town, and at least the presence of an unbroken reserve would have curbed the English pursuit, which was from the Scots point of view the most disastrous part of the battle. Anything that could make the defenders alter the position of their troops was to the advantage of the Scots, as Edward could hardly have moved his men from centre to right without masking

masking/

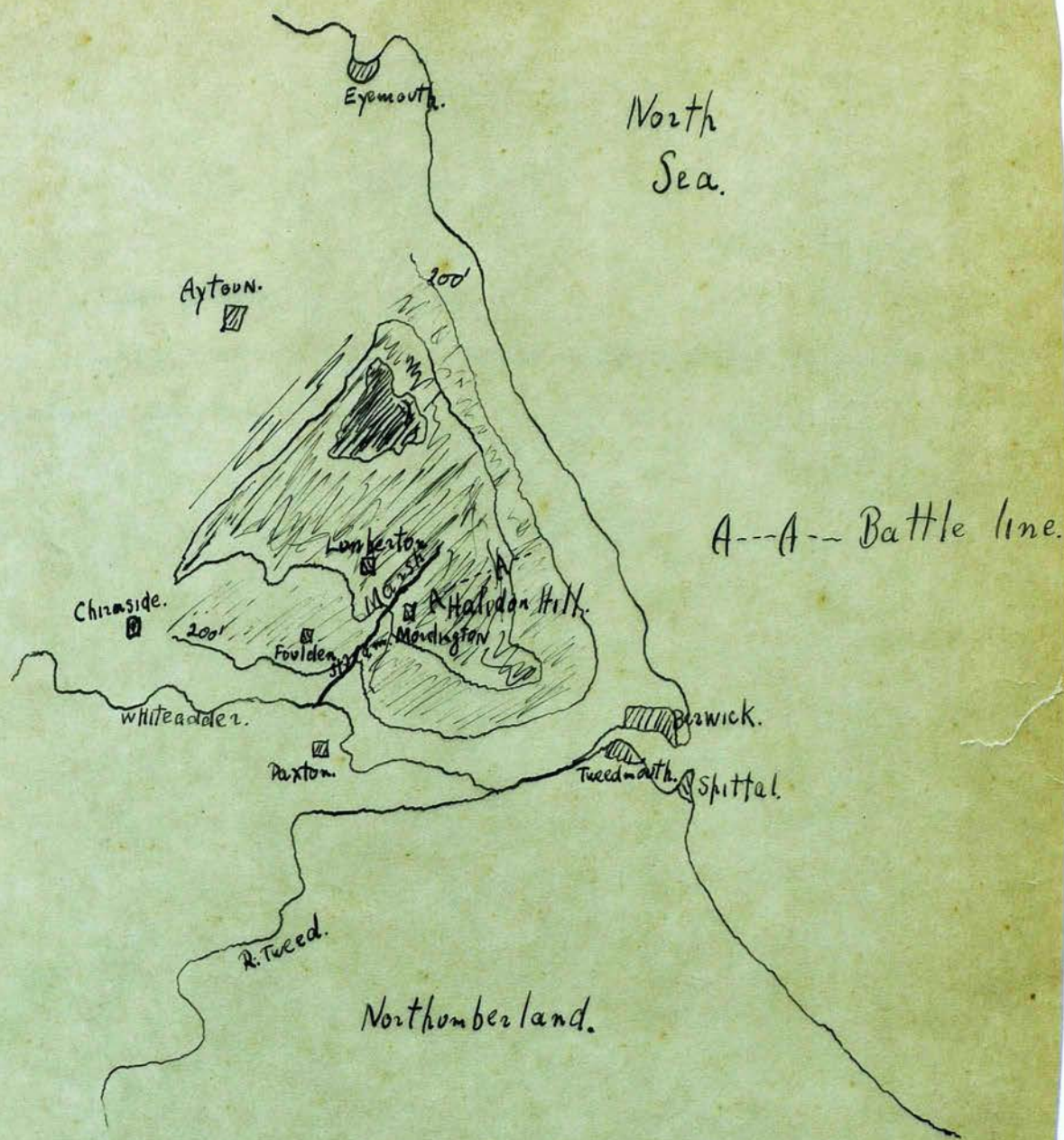
the fire of some of his archers./

The lesson of the loss of Berwick is evident to the modern reader, but there is no subsequent action on the part of the Scots to show that they realised the true weakness of their position. Theoretically Douglas at Morpeth was posted on Edward's line of communication with his base at Newcastle and accordingly the English should not have been able to proceed with the siege. But the fact was that the true English line lay on the waters of the North Sea, and that so long as the Scots could offer no serious threat to the fleet of transports and supply ships which accompanied almost every invading army, they could not be sure of holding their coastal fortresses and areas free from attack. The influence of sea-power is once more the clue to the success of the English and the explanation why the Scottish defensive strategy, perfect in theory, so frequently broke down in practice, through the devastation of the border areas being overcome by the introduction of supplies by sea. 2.

1 It is worth noting that owing to the shape of the hill the English divisions were not exactly in line, and thus the Scottish attack became almost one in echelon. The assaults delivered by the right and centre divisions of the Scots were repulsed before the left section had got to close quarters.

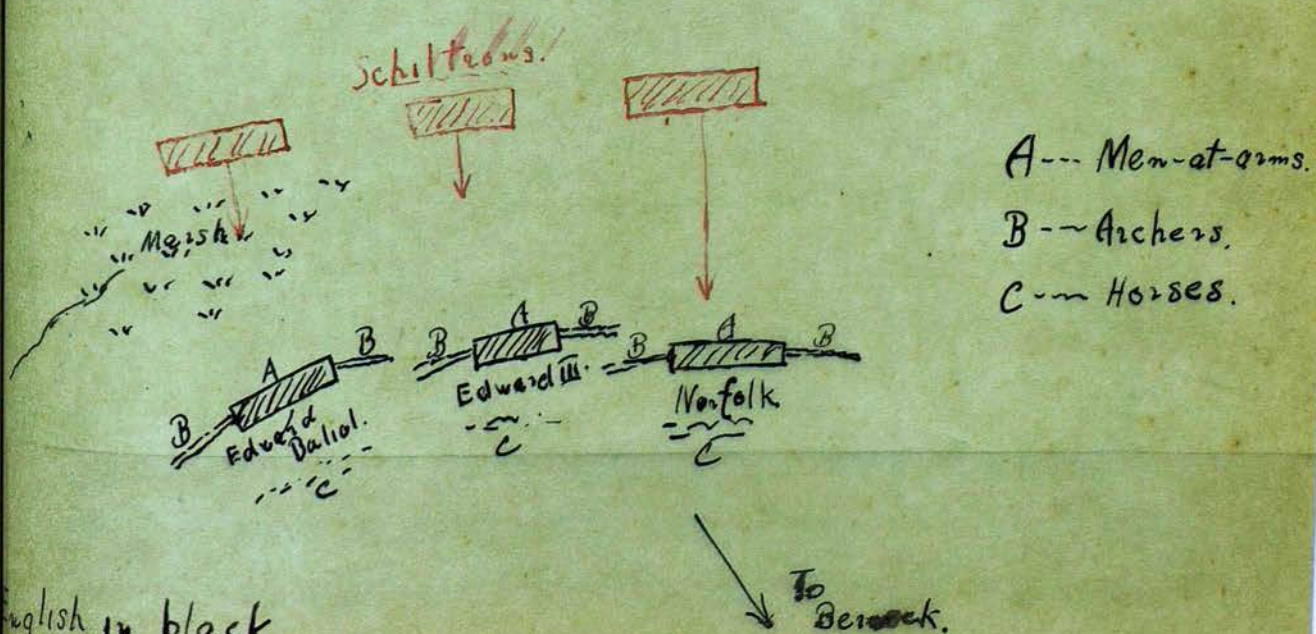
2 Further attention is directed in a later chapter to this most important influence on the affairs of Scotland throughout the invasions directed against her by her southern neighbour.

Sketch Map of Halidon and Berwick district.



Scale about $\frac{1}{2}$ " to mile.

Battle of Halidon Hill.



English in black.

Scots in red.

Chapter XI.

Guerilla Warfare.

Section 1. The campaign of 1335.

After the crushing defeat sustained at Halidon, organised defence ceased in Scotland for the time being. The young king was removed to France, and, in the absence of a recognised regent whom all were willing to obey, the rude feudal system of raising levies, which was the only regular resource of the country at that time, fell into abeyance. The nobles and barons, true to their worst traditions, chose the side which best accorded with their own private interests and threw the question of patriotism to the winds. The defence of the country fell to the lot of the partisan bands and the followers of the popular leaders and the few men of high rank who still strove to maintain the independence of Scotland. Perhaps the most disastrous feature was the inability of the Scots, disunited as they were, to check the English invasions by the customary and systematic devastation of the exposed areas. On the other hand the situation had its hopeful features. So many of the strongholds of the country had been levelled by the patriots of an earlier period that it was not possible for the English to establish by a system of garrisons so firm a grip as had been exercised by the first Edward. An additional factor in favour of the Scots was the attention which the king of England began to direct to France at this time, an interest which finally developed into almost complete distraction from Scottish affairs.

As a result of the diverse parts played by the Scottish barons in the struggle and of the fact that the people of certain districts preferred to follow these leaders than to devote themselves to the national interests, there developed a confused mass of military operations, some of them of respectable magnitude but of quite inferior importance in the main question of Scottish independence. All through the medley of private claims and broils, however, there can be discerned the constant

constant/

difficulties of the English in securing a definite hold on the country as distinct from marching across it, and, later, in carrying out their projects with inadequate forces, when once the main strength of England had been directed towards France. The fighting of the year 1335 affords an instance of the former of the two problems.

The action of Edward Baliol in paying homage to Edward III for Scotland and in signing away large portions of the south at Newcastle on July 12th, 1334, / caused widespread anger in Scotland. Despite the threats of a popular rising, Baliol was deserted at Stirling in August by the Disinherited earls of Buchan and Athole, who repeated the mistake of 1332 by proceeding north to push their own private interests. Soon after this separation the storm broke and Baliol was forced to retreat to Berwick skirmishing with the Scottish insurgents as he went. His papers and treasure were lost. At the same time the English knights, Talbot, Stirling, and Felton, who had accompanied Buchan and Athole, seeing that a rising was at hand, attempted to escape with a small escort of English archers, but were captured at Linlithgow by the Scottish knights, Keith and Ross. Athole himself was also taken shortly afterwards, and Buchan was besieged in his castle of Dundarg with a garrison of three hundred followers. There he held out stubbornly, but was eventually forced to capitulate at the beginning of 1335.²

The news of the disasters in the north was carried by Sir Thomas Ughtred to Edward and moved him to reprisals. Late in 1334 he advanced to the eastern borders and undertook the restoration of the defences of Roxburgh, which had been destroyed by James Douglas twenty years before. Some guard for the Northumbrian marches had become essential as numerous villages were burned by the raiders in the winter of 1334-1335.³ During the

/Bain, III, 1127.

²Bridlington chronicle, pp. 119-121; Meaux chronicle, p. 372.

³Meaux chronicle, p. 374.

the/

spring of 1335 a truce was granted to the Scots at the instance of the king of France, but in the early days of July Edward again invaded Scotland by Carlisle and pushed rapidly north by Dalswynton and Airth-on-the-Forth.¹ At the same time Baliol crossed the border at Berwick with a division of the army, and, marching by a different route, joined Edward in the neighbourhood of Glasgow, whence their united forces proceeded to Perth. On the way Baliol attacked the castle of Cumbernauld,² which was held by nearly two hundred men-at-arms. The garrison attempted resistance, but the English fired the tower through the lower windows and so smoked out the defenders, who were mostly massacred.³

After so sweeping an invasion from two different quarters it might be expected that the south of Scotland would be in a state of subjection. But it appears that there was still present a considerable body of patriots under the command of the earl of Moray.⁴ The explanation of this state of affairs is that the great wilderness of Jedworth was still largely impregnable to the English arms and could harbour in safety the Scottish defenders until the storm of invasion had rolled past. Having evaded the thrusts of Edward and Baliol, the Scots emerged from this refuge and attacked the count of Namur, who was following up the English advance with two or three hundred troops. The ambushed force took refuge on the rock of Edinburgh. The castle, however, had remained ruined⁵ since its capture by Randolph and provided no refuge for the fugitives, who were consequently compelled to surrender on the following day. The earl of Moray conducted them to the border, but was himself captured on his return by the constable of Roxburgh castle.⁶

¹Bain, III, 1166-1170.

²In reality it seems to have been little but a peel or tower.

³Bridlington chronicle, p. 122.

⁴Not to be confused with Sir Andrew Moray.

⁵See Bain, III, App. IV.

⁶The Scalacronica, fo. 219b; the Bridlington chronicle, pp. 123-124;

Meaux chronicle, pp. 375-376.

This minor disaster showed Edward the weakness of his position in that he possessed no fortress of standing between the borders and Stirling. Accordingly, after helping and directing Baliol in various forays and punitive expeditions in the vicinity of Perth, he saw to the reconstruction of the fortifications on the rock of Edinburgh. This being put in hand, he returned towards the borders. Not long after he was followed by Edward Baliol, who had entrusted the administration of the "conquered" country to David of Athole, who had again adhered to the English side. But how incomplete the whole enterprise yet remained was soon shown by the success of a rebellion led by Sir Andrew Moray, Patrick, earl of March, and William Douglas, which resulted in the defeat and death of Athole at Kilblain on November 30th. /.

The invasion of 1335 was one of major importance and represented a great effort on the part of Edward III, but it effected very little of permanent value. The attackers were not seriously checked, or even resisted, at any point, evidently because the Scottish power of resistance in mass was for the time being shattered, but the barren nature of this great military promenade made it clear that to accomplish a definite conquest it was necessary to root out the nests of resistance and to hold down the land by a chain of posts with a permanent army of occupation. Annual invasions might go on for years, but could achieve nothing but the destruction of Scottish lives and property

Section 2. The French distraction.

The year 1336 saw a renewal of the English invasion and Edward and Baliol again formed their base of operations at Perth. From this central point they carried out numerous forays, including the expedition of the king to Lochindorb castle to relieve the besieged countess of Buchan. The castle of Bothwell was fortified in order to guard the western route from Carlisle to the Scottish midlands, but it did not remain long in English hands. John of Eltham, the king's brother, died at Perth and

and/

altogether the campaign was not fruitful in results, although as usual the English forces easily occupied the open areas and confined the Scots to the more inaccessible districts. It is noteworthy that the Flemings, acting in cooperation with the French, afforded help to the Scots by sending some arms and supplies by sea. As a result frequent collisions took place with the English ships so that the English command of the North Sea was no longer unchallenged. The campaign of 1337 was even less decisive and it becomes evident that Edward was now more concerned with putting the Scots out of action and so rendering useless the Franco-Scottish alliance than in securing a permanent conquest./

In January, 1338,² the castle of Dunbar was besieged by the earls of Salisbury and Arundel, acting under the direction of the king, who was at Berwick at the commencement of the operations. The garrison was strong and in good fettle, ably commanded by Agnes, the countess of March.³ The besiegers cut a deep trench across the isthmus to prevent any sally by the besieged and planted their huts and tents behind this defence. Next they erected engines with which they bombarded the castle, but apparently without serious effect.⁴ The next step was for the English to attempt to reach the foot of the wall and with this object in view they constructed a large sow under cover of which they might undermine the defences. The narrow and difficult nature of the approach, however, made the progress of the sow very slow, and the garrison was able to destroy it and most of the force which it protected by pouring on it pitch and sulphur and by pelting it with logs and stones.

¹Bridlington chronicle, pp. 128-129; Meaux chronicle, pp. 377-378.

²Bain, III, 1255.

³The situation of the castle has already been described in the first chapter of the second part.

⁴Patrick of March had refortified it, and it was probably much stronger than at any previous time.

Open assault having failed, the siege became a blockade which dragged on for several months, entry on the sea side of the castle being prohibited by two English galleys which lay off the harbour. Attempts made to overcome the defence by bribery were futile, and an endeavour to intimidate the countess into surrender by threatening to execute her captive brother / also failed. At a time when the garrison's stock of food was running very low supplies were carried in through the enterprise of Alexander Ramsay, who used for this purpose small boats which crept along close to the shore at night. To increase the embarrassment of the besiegers two successive bodies of troops, sent from Berwick to aid in the attack, were intercepted and routed by partisan bodies of Scots.

Finally in June, after the siege and blockade had lasted for five months, the English abandoned their enterprise. Edward was preparing to go overseas to Brabant, and the earls engaged in the attack on Dunbar were determined to accompany him. After this repulse and in the absence of further considerable help from the south, as the king became more and more deeply involved in French affairs, the war degenerated into a succession of truces, raids, and surprises, in which the Scots had the upper hand, Perth being taken from Sir Thomas Ughtred in 1339 by Robert the Steward, the future king, and Roxburgh by Ramsay in 1342.²

Section 3. Failure of the English.

The credit for the fresh liberation of Scotland which was achieved between the years 1335 and 1342 cannot justly be given to the northern people as a whole. That period indeed rather showed a breakdown in the typical defensive strategy so frequently and effectively employed against the first two Edwards. Of systematic devastation for the purpose of turning an

/The earl of Moray.

²The Lanercost chronicle, fo. 230; Bridlington chronicle, p. 137; Meaux chronicle, p. 383; Hemingburgh, ii, p. 313; Walsingham, i, p. 200; John Major, V, XV.

an/

invasion there was little or none. Penetration of the country became easy for the English, and the success of the Scots, which should rather be called the failure of the English, was gained by a series of haphazard operations following no regular plan of campaign. It follows that what little credit was gained by so unsatisfactory a measure of victory must be given to Andrew Moray, Ramsay, certain of the Douglasses, and other local leaders who struggled bravely on in the face of apparently overwhelming misfortunes. That such should be the case cannot be attributed as a fault to the commons of Scotland. There are sufficient reasons for the breakdown of organised defence without impugning their patriotism. Halidon Hill, unlike Dunbar, was a crushing disaster which left the Scots without a field army and with very little prospect of raising one in the immediate future. No great natural leader of the type of Wallace or Bruce appeared to unite and lead the patriots. At the same time administration was weakened by the misfortunes of the various regents, and internal dissension, which laid the country open to invasion, was caused by the complete selfishness of many of the barons, who, in some cases at least, drew with them to the English side their personal followers and retainers./ It follows from all this that the escape of the Scots from conquest was an exceedingly lucky one and that it was due to mistaken aims and inadequate means on the part of their opponents rather than to any superlative skill in military operations shown by themselves.

Few critics would be found who would put Edward III on the same plane with Edward I as an administrator or with Henry V as a general. But the military affairs, and certainly the military credit, of England are generally supposed to have stood higher in the fourteenth than during the latter part of the thirteenth century. This is a misconception, probably due to the fact that

/There are many documents in Bain, III, showing the alarming number of Scots among the so-called English garrisons of the Scottish castles at this period.

that/

the victories of Halidon, Sluys, Crecy, Neville's Cross, Poitiers and Navaretta won by the English soldiers/overshadow by their very magnitude the successes of Orewyn Bridge, Dunbar, and Falkirk. Yet, with the exception of Sluys which gave the English to some extent the command of the sea, the victories of Edward III were barren ones gained by the exploitation of a novel system of tactics, while the minor successes of his grandfather led to the subjugation of Wales and almost secured the conquest of Scotland. The inference is that Edward III excelled in the art of gaining victories, but was very deficient in ability in the more difficult task of reaping the fruits of triumphs in the field.² There must then have been qualities in the military management of Edward I, which were lacking in that of his grandson.

It is an axiom of generalship that no invading army should advance while there remains in its rear a great fortress untaken or unmasked. To violate this rule entails harassed communications and a disastrous retreat in case of defeat in the field. It will be found that except for the minor case of Dirleton in the Falkirk campaign Edward I rigidly observed this rule, while Edward III regularly and systematically neglected it. To this neglect can be attributed the frequent outbreaks, ambushes and interceptions, which took place in the English rear between 1335 and 1338. It is true that few castles in the Lowlands were in Scottish hands at that time, but fortresses are not built of stone walls only. The great forest of Jedworth was the bulwark of the Scottish borderers at that time, a stronghold which Edward III hardly even threatened. Its conquest would have been a task of more than one campaign, but it is a fact that the English king at Edinburgh or Stirling in 1336 with a subjugated border at his

I make this statement deliberately. Sluys, although fought at sea, was essentially a soldiers battle.

²At the same time it should be remarked that of the five land battles named Edward was only present at two, and these, Halidon and Crecy, the easiest to win.

his/

back would have been infinitely nearer success than he was in Lochaber with guerilla warfare rampant in his rear. Edward, in fact, did not in either Scotland or France show any knowledge of the real means or steps of conquest. He had an unfortunate knack of striking deep into his opponent's country without consolidating his rear. Thus it is that while Edward I and Henry V take rank as great conquerors, Edward III and his son, the Black Prince, must be denominated merely raiders on a grand scale.

To what extent and for how long the English king seriously contemplated the possibility of a Scottish conquest it is impossible to say. The observer, denied an insight into the workings of Edward's mind on the subject,¹ can only judge by external events. From the time of his failure in the Weardale campaign the king had cherished a desire to punish the Scots, but it seems improbable that he had any idea of securing the whole of the north before the victory of Halidon. Rather was he drawn into that conflict by the bribe of the border districts offered by Baliol. But the sweeping success outside Berwick and the collapse of Scottish resistance opened the prospect of securing Scotland under a vassal king and the campaigns of 1335 and 1336 represent whole-hearted attempts to establish English domination. These two campaigns, however, seem to have exhausted Edward's interest in the subject. The inclination towards France became marked and from that point Baliol was used as a catspaw to keep the Scots distracted and prevent their rendering effective aid to the French. This branch of Edward's policy was to some extent successful, but that cannot absolve him from the charges of vacillation and of throwing away the substance to grasp at the shadow.²

The conclusion is that it was Edward's poor generalship

¹In any case it seems very probable that Edward did not know his own mind in this matter.

²No permanent English conquest of France was possible in the Middle Ages, but such a conquest of Scotland might have been achieved.

generalship/

and lack of stern perseverance that saved Scotland at this time. We look in vain for any new departure or innovation in means of warfare among the Scots. Military practice in the northern country presents a dead level of mediocrity only relieved by such exploits as Ramsay's relief of Dunbar and the gallant defence of that stronghold by the countess of March.

Part III.

The Franco-Scottish Alliance.

Chapter I.

Neville's Cross and Otterburn.

Section 1. David's invasion.

The invasion of 1346 was the first of the Scottish attempts, usually disastrous in their result, to relieve an ally who was well able to safeguard his own interests. The weaknesses of a national policy which aimed at making ^a sacrifices for a country from which little could be expected in return is sufficiently obvious. In a military sense it is only necessary to point out that the object of distracting the attention of the English could have been achieved more easily with a minimum of risk by a series of vigorous and well-directed raids with a mobile force.

In the early days of October David, moved by the representations of the French as to the danger to Calais, crossed the western march with an organised force of two thousand men-at-arms and a large host of hobelers and light troops. (The first enterprise undertaken by the invaders was the siege of the castle of Liddel in the Carlisle district. After a few days' blockade the besiegers advanced to the assault under cover of heavy beams and timbers. Fascines² had been constructed for the attack and with these the moat was rapidly filled. The stormers were then able to reach the foot of the wall which they broke through with iron tools. When an entrance had been effected, little mercy was shown to the defenders, and the constable, Sir Walter Selby,

¹The Lanercost chronicle, fo. 241.

²A fascine is a bundle of brushwood or rushes, or even a wicker basket filled with earth (though this is usually known as a gabion), used in large quantities for filling up a moat, sunken road, or other natural obstacle.

Selby, /

was put to death by David's orders. /

After this minor success the Scots proceeded through Gilsland and North Tynedale by Lanercost, Naworth, and Redpath, wasting the country as they went. The Tyne was crossed at Hexham or Corbridge,² but this district was spared in order that the Scots might draw their provisions from it. From the Tyne valley the raiders proceeded up the Devil water and thence down the valley of the Derwent towards Durham, which city they approached from the west.

The foraging detachments in the Scottish van had been commanded throughout the campaign by the knight of Liddesdale. On October 14th he was surprised in a fog at Merrington at dawn and routed by the vanguard of the English forces, which had been gathering in the neighbourhood of Richmond under the direction of the archbishop of York and the northern wardens. The encounter was probably an accidental one and not deliberately planned by the English. A rapid march north from the rendezvous, rendered necessary by the need of saving Durham from the advancing Scots, precipitated the collision.³

/Bain, III, 1670; Lanercost chronicle, fo. 241b; Meaux chronicle, III, 60

²The assertion that the Scots passed the Tyne near Newcastle and approached Durham by Beaurepaire is negatived by the document in Bain, III, 1501, which refers to the devastation done by David and his host in the neighbourhood of Blanchland Abbey.

³With reference to this incident it may be remarked that the Scots were as a rule singularly successful in avoiding surprises. With the notable exceptions of the capture of William at Alnwick and the rout of Bruce at Methven Wood, there is no example of a disaster sustained by lack of watchfulness. This is in strong contrast to the fact that many successful enterprises were carried out by the Scots themselves, frequently in hostile territory. Unfortunately there is no definite indication of the method of protection

utilised by the Scots, but it seems probable that they had no definite system. In their own country the peasantry could be relied upon to give information of any threatened attack, while in a raid into England the office of scouts would be performed by the foragers and plunderers who spread over the districts round the invaders.

Section 2. The battle.

After the minor success gained at the expense of the knight of Liddesdale and his followers, the English marched rapidly northwards to save Durham which the Scots were approaching from the west. On this side Durham is dominated as far as the banks of the Wear by the steep declivity on whose crest is the locality known as Neville's Cross. From the foot of this hill towards the west there stretches for some considerable distance a plain comparatively free from natural obstacles. Across this open ground the Scots were slowly advancing when the English force, interposing itself between the invaders and the outskirts of Durham, took up position on the lower slopes of the hill./

The English force consisted of close on a thousand men-at-arms with several thousand archers.² Among its leaders were the archbishop of York, Percy, Neville, Mowbray, Scrope, and Rokeby. In the march north from Richmond by Barnard castle and Bishop Auckland the English were arranged in three columns under the command of the archbishop, Percy, and Rokeby. It was the divisions of the archbishop and Rokeby which had routed the force under the knight of Liddesdale. The three columns would naturally form the three divisions in which the English were arranged for the battle, each section having, as had become usual, archers on its flanks. The Scots were also drawn up in three divisions under the leadership of the earl of Moray, assisted by the earls of Strathearn and Fife, the king, with Sir Malcolm Fleming, and the earl of

The battle could not be fought on the crest, which is much too narrow to contain a large array of troops. Moreover, if the defenders had taken position higher up the hill, they could easily have been flanked and could not have manoeuvred.

²Meaux chronicle, III, p. 61, gives nine thousand, but this possibly is an exaggeration.

³Froissart, Ch. 138, declares that the English were in four sections, but this cannot be accepted in the face of the assertions of the Lanercost and Meaux chronicles. Froissart's account is very faulty. He makes the English gather at Newcastle.

of/

Dunbar, with Robert Stewart. Up to the last moment David had been sceptical as to the reported English advance, and it was not till the enemy were already feeling his outposts that he prepared for a decisive action by arraying his force on a slight eminence facing the English position.

It was the intention of the invaders to remain on the defensive in their position and there to await an attack from the English which they felt confident of repulsing. The English, however, had no idea of throwing away the advantage of the ground and set to work to provoke the Scots into assuming the offensive. With this end in view they detached a body of several hundred ~~x~~ archers, who advanced into the open ground between the armies and proceeded to tease their opponents with a well-directed fire from fairly long range. The obvious counterstroke was for David to sweep away the skirmishers or compel them to retreat by a ~~x~~ charge of a section of his hobelers, and the adoption of this course was urged upon him by certain ~~of~~ his older officers. The advice was given in vain. The Scots began to grow restive under the provocation of a fire to which they could make little or no return, and the impatient king ordered an advance of the whole army against the English position.

The charge, so rashly undertaken, was gallantly carried out. Under a heavy fire of arrows the Scots pushed across the intervening space and hurled themselves on the English divisions. In this advance they suffered heavily from the rain of missiles with which they were assailed, but by keeping together and using their shields and helmets^e to the best advantage they avoided the ruinous loss which might have been expected. But the charge ~~had~~ had weakened the attackers in a direction much more serious by sapping their initial energy and rendering them more liable to exhaustion in the close combat which ensued.

At first the furious rush of the Scots drove back the

/A modified and probably unintentional revival of the idea of the Roman testudo.

the/

English, but the defenders rallied in their turn and held their ground bravely. A fierce and protracted struggle at close quarters followed, the attackers relying chiefly on their axes. At one stage in the combat the exhaustion produced by the fierce efforts of both sides caused a momentary pause. Soon, however, the fight was renewed, and the Scots, suffering from the effects of their charge, began to lose ground. The battle, however, was by no means lost, when the earl of Dunbar, apparently fearing a rout in which he would be involved, took to flight. His example was followed by the men of his division and also by some of the troops on the other wing and in the rear. But in the centre round the king there still remained a closely-packed body of men on whom the English closed. After making a brave resistance the Scots succumbed to exhaustion and were captured in large numbers. David, who had fought gallantly and had been wounded in the face by an arrow, was taken by a squire, John Copeland. A pursuit followed, but was not very successful, as the English were themselves tired out and had suffered some considerable loss in the combat. The battle had lasted from nine till noon. Many earls and knights had fallen or were captured. /

Section 3. Otterburn.

At the beginning of August, 1388, the earls of Moray, Douglas, and Dunbar crossed the eastern march with a body of three thousand borderers. This raid was only part of a greater movement, as another force of Scots entered the Carlisle district at the same time. Douglas pushed rapidly south, crossed the Tyne,² and proceeded to ravage the northern part of the bishopric of Durham. Meanwhile the earl of Northumberland, who was responsible for the eastern border, stationed himself at Alnwick and sent his two sons

/Baker of Swinbroke, pp. 172-173; Meaux chronicle, III; pp. 61-62; Henry Knighton, pp. 42-44; Lanercost chronicle, fos. 242, 242b; Froissart, Ch. 138.

²Froissart's statement that the Scots crossed the Tyne at Brancepeth is unintelligible, as the place is south of Durham.

sons, /

Henry and Ralph Percy, with a number of knights to Newcastle. The attack had come as a surprise and the full forces of the English were not yet assembled.

After harrying the bishopric Douglas recrossed the Tyne and for a period of two days took post close to the fortress of Newcastle. Skirmishing took place at the barriers and in this Douglas had the fortune to capture the pennon of Henry Percy. The Scots then continued their retreat, stormed Ponteland castle,¹ and camped on the rising ground of Otterburn in Redesdale, a little way above the river. The bulk of the force wished to push on to join their comrades near Carlisle, but Douglas insisted on waiting for two or three days to give Percy a chance to fight.²

Meanwhile Henry Percy had made a forced march from Newcastle with a body of English considerably superior in number to the Scots. On the night of August 5th in bright moonlight he attempted to surprise the camp of Douglas. The surprise was, however, ineffective and was ably countered by the Scots. Under cover of light skirmishing parties they evacuated their camp and formed their array on a knoll a little distance off. The English charge was spent on an empty bivouac and in consequence the attackers fell into some confusion.

Douglas then led an effective counter-attack which drove back the English. There followed a desperate struggle in the heart of the camp in which the Scottish leader was struck to the ground by repeated blows of spears and axes and mortally wounded. The uncertain light prevented the knowledge of his fall from spreading and a rally of his men resulted in the rescue of his body and the capture of the younger Percy by Maxwell. The Scots, ably directed by Dunbar and Moray, and led on by the Sinclairs and Sir James Lindsay; bore up bravely against the superior numbers to which

¹About six miles north-west of Newcastle.

²This was a typical piece of chivalry, but by no means in accordance with the views of the borderers whose motto was rather "strictly business".

which/

they were opposed. The strain of the forced march and the failure of the surprise attack now began to tell on the English, who commenced to straggle and lose cohesion. Henry Percy made a desperate attempt to rally his men, but this effort only led to his being taken prisoner by Montgomery. This was the final blow and the English, losing heart at the loss of their leader, scattered and fled. They were vigorously pursued by the victorious Scots and lost heavily, several knights and men-at-arms being captured. The battle had in fact been an exceptionally sanguinary one and probably nearly half of the English force was destroyed or taken. The Scottish loss ran into several hundreds.

On the following day news came to the raiders that the bishop of Durham was approaching with a strong body of reinforcements. The Scottish borderers, tired by their exertions but determined to keep the field, formed in a strong position and confidently awaited the English attack. The bishop, however, after reconnoitring the hostile ranks, decided that the risk to be incurred in assaulting so strong a position was too great and drew off his men. The Scots then burned their camp and retired quietly across the border to Melrose, while at the same time the raiding force in the neighbourhood of Carlisle also recrossed the border. (

Section 4. Decline of the schiltrons.

Both Neville's Cross and Otterburn were "soldiers' battles" in the sense that they were finally decided by the staying power and endurance of the troops on both sides rather than by complicated manoeuvres. Neither was essentially an archery combat and in neither did the Scottish schiltrons reappear in its customary form.

David's invasion of the north of England was faulty both in conception and in execution. Raids should have been preferred to a formal invasion, and, when once that invasion was undertaken, battle should have been avoided except in the most favourable circumstances. As a conquest of the north was out of the question,

question/

the aim should have been to do as much damage as possible without endangering the invading force in open combat.

To liken Neville's Cross to Halidon Hill is a mistake. In the latter battle the Scots were in regular schiltrons and, as at Dupplin Moor, were defeated and almost destroyed by the main power of the English archers. In the former the action of the bowmen served to precipitate the combat and to force the Scots to fight under unfavourable conditions, but it cannot be said to have exercised any serious influence on the actual fighting. Doubtless the Scots suffered severely from the archery fire in their quick advance, but the battle was won by the stubborn resistance of the English men-at-arms and the bowmen in hand-to-hand fighting, coupled with the exhaustion of the Scots.

The result of the fight was surprising in face of the fact that the Scots usually gained the upper hand in a combat settled at close quarters. For this particular and exceptional instance of disaster the preliminary exertions of the Scots were not alone responsible. It is evident that the attackers had not the customary large proportion of spearmen in their ranks and that they relied chiefly on their axes and maces. The temporary unpopularity of the pike may have been due to the disaster sustained by the schiltrons at Halidon. It is true that a man carrying only short weapons could protect himself more effectively with his shield when crossing the open under archery fire, and to this fact the partial success of the Scottish advance may be attributed. But it is equally evident that when the moment of actual contact came the spear was the most profitable weapon. Additional factors contributing to the defeat of the Scots were the comparative ineffectiveness of the charge against a dismounted enemy, and the undoubted weakness in morale and lack of confidence in their leaders which existed in the northern ranks in this campaign.

It is almost superfluous to say that David should have won the battle outright or at least should have sustained a mere check instead of a crushing defeat. As the English were out of range of the Scottish position they had to send their archers

archers/

forward to provoke their opponents to battle./ If David had been content to sweep the skirmishers from his front, as he could easily have done, the English would either have had to break off the fight or would have had to advance en masse within range of the Scots. In the latter case an equal advance on the part of David's army would have brought about a combat on level ground in which the Scots could have enjoyed the benefit of their superior numbers without any preliminary disadvantage. Nevertheless this superiority was not an overwhelming one, as has some times been suggested. The most extreme proportion which can be allowed is one of three to two.

The fighting of the battle of Otterburn was only justified by its favourable result. The raid had been a successful one and had achieved its limited object. The natural sequel was to prosecute the retreat either towards Carlisle or over the border, and the Scottish leaders who advocated these courses were certainly right, while Douglas was in the wrong. If Henry Percy had elected to halt near the borderers' camp and, after giving a much needed interval of repose to his wearied men, to give battle in daylight when his archers could have been used to the fullest advantage, it is difficult to see what could have saved the Scots from defeat. As it was, the bowmen were of little use in the deceptive moonlight and shadows, and the advantage of freshness was on the side of the Scots. In this case there was no weakness in morale in the northern ranks, fighting as they were under a proved leader in whom they had the fullest confidence.

The erroneous strategical ideas of Douglas were fully redeemed by his tactical skill and personal bravery. The temporary withdrawal from the camp under cover of the skirmishers was a master-stroke of war. At once it took the edge off the English offensive by avoiding the first fierce rush and tempting the men to leave their ranks to pillage. Then at the decisive moment the counter-attack was launched with devastating results.

In this respect the combat resembles that of Homildon Hill.

results./

In it Douglas himself took part and in doing so he exhibited the soundest judgement. Generally speaking a general's place is in the rear, not in the front, and it is no part of his duty to run unnecessary risks, but at Otterburn the circumstances were exceptional. In the absence of reserves or flanking movements the general's part was played out as soon as the Scottish counter-stroke was launched, and there remained to be performed only the duty of the family head and personal chief. In short the Scottish leader combined the roles of general and soldier with exemplary skill.

As at Neville's Cross both sides fought on foot and the spearmen played no outstanding part in the struggle. When combat was joined the affair became one great scrimmage without ordered ranks or divisions, in which the influences for victory were very similar to those operating in the battle outside Durham. In this case also they operated against the side superior in numbers and deficient in leadership. Particularly noticeable is the fact that the fall of Douglas exercised no serious effect on the Scots and that his lieutenants, tried border warriors, were sufficiently skilful to carry on the attack and secure the victory.

Chapter II.

The Army of the Stuarts.

Section 1. The raising of troops.

During the reigns of the first four Jameses Scotland enjoyed a period of comparative immunity from the aggression of her southern neighbour. This interval of repose, due to the joint influences of the French wars and of the dynastic struggle between the houses of York and Lancaster, enabled the Scots to develop their military system to an extent never reached before. Up to the time of Alexander III the northern armies were rude levies of semi-savage warriors, and during the war of Independence they were composed largely of volunteer patriots, the country being too much disturbed by English invasions and garrisons and by the defection of her barons to permit of a regular conscription. But in the fifteenth century the question of independence was settled and the barons, though they frequently indulged in rebellions against the crown, acknowledged the Stuart dynasty as the rightful rulers of the country and were united in resistance to English attacks.

In the modern use of the term there was no standing army in Scotland at this time, but that admission does not preclude the existence of professional soldiers, of whom there was a considerable number. Every baron from the king downwards had his band, varying in numbers according to the wealth and rank of the master, of retainers and men-at-arms, who were on constant service and whose sole duty in life was the support of their leader's cause and the guardianship of his person. Although not organised as part of a unit these men-at-arms, well equipped and efficient in the management of their weapons through constant practice, constituted in time of war a formidable corps of veterans to leaven the mass of raw troops. In addition each royal burgh, frequently threatened by the jealousy of neighbouring barons, kept up a burgh guard of enlisted and trained men,

men, /

who, in part at least, strengthened the national forces in time of war. /

Apart from the nucleus of trained troops the mass of the army was composed of levies raised in time of war only. Nominally every man between the ages of sixteen and sixty was liable for service, but in practice it is doubtful if such a levy en masse could be carried out except in particular districts for the purpose of defence. To make the law effective would have necessitated the existence of a register compiled by census and kept up to date. Nevertheless the chances are that few able-bodied men of suitable military age could escape service in the case of a national emergency, even if they had wished to do so. The somewhat sketchy methods of enforcing the levy would be strengthened by public opinion and the martial instincts of a warlike people. For military purposes the responsible officers were the baillies in the burghs and the sheriffs in the country districts.

For offensive purposes troops were raised by the regular feudal levy. Lands were granted to barons in denominations of marks² and the assessment of troops was fixed according to the value of the grant. The burghs were also held liable to send quotas of soldiers, though this obligation might on occasion be remitted on payment of a fine.³ The maximum period for which the king could demand service in one year was forty days. The

¹An armed guard was a necessity for the mediaeval burgh, as otherwise the common lands would have been stolen and the barons of the district might even have carried their feuds into the streets of the town; e.g. the Kennedys and Montgomeries in Ayrshire.

²See the Register of the Great Seal of Scotland.

³When the expedition was confined to a raid it was sometimes held expedient not to disturb the trade of a town by demanding its quota. Thus Dundee and Perth purchased immunity from participation in the Norham raid; Lord High Treasurer's Accounts, I, p. 313.

The/

necessary summons to the host was sent by special messenger to the sheriffs of the counties concerned./In certain cases only the quotas of particular districts were called out. On ~~xxxx~~ paper the scheme was a good and equitable one, but in practice it laboured under the disadvantages of slow mobilisation, difficulty of enforcing the obligations, and limited time for an offensive campaign.

An important consideration was the financing of the army. The feudal quota was under the obligation of feeding itself during the prescribed period and of providing its own arms and equipment, so that the campaign was free from expense on their account. But it is questionable whether this benefit was not more than offset by the lack of uniformity which prevailed in equipment and the difficulty of enforcing a ~~xxxxxx~~ proper provision of weapons; the obligation of the troops to feed themselves often led to straggling and unorganised foraging.²

When service was required beyond the specified period of forty days the king had to pay wages, which varied in amount according to the nature of the work.³ Such service was, of course, most necessary in the case of fortresses which were held by means of permanent garrisons, and, in the later days of the period, in the case of specialised troops, such as gunners, whose work demanded continuous attention and training. The king had also to provide the artillery for the campaign. Even these expenses, comparatively small as they were, occasionally placed the king

¹Lord High Treasurer's Accounts, I, p. 320; "The 14th day of Februaire, giffin to Symon Spardour, to pas with the kingis lettrez to the schirefis of (seven counties) to warne all within the bowndis to remane with the king the 6th day of April and 40 days thereftir"

²Theoretically the soldier should have brought his food with him; but considerations of transport would negative this.

³Lord High Treasurer's Accounts, I, p. 326; "Giffin to ilk man (gunners) in the owk of wage 10/-."

king/

in financial difficulties. Recourse was then had to loans, but, in the absence of an organised system of finance, the king could only borrow on his personal security or by pledging his own property. /

Section 2. Weapons.

During this period laws were frequently passed by the Scottish parliament regulating the equipment with which each man was required to provide himself. For this purpose the people were divided into sections according to the wealth, fixed or movable, possessed, and, although the marks of division might vary, the regulations as to the types of weapons remained more or less constant. The inference that may be drawn from the multiplicity of statutes on this subject is that the law was more honoured in the breach than in the observance and that as a consequence the provisions had frequently to be reenacted.

When the various statutes dealing with the subject are put together, it is found that there were three classes of men who had equipment both offensive and defensive. At the head of the list came the barons, knights, wealthy traders, "gentlemen" in short, who had an income of more than twenty pounds in the year or a total property of more than one hundred. The members of this class were required to provide them selves with horses, body armour, and the usual offensive weapons of the heavily armed cavalryman. So seldom is this class mentioned in comparison with the others, that it seems probable that most of its members readily complied with the laws on the subject, a fact hardly surprising as they constituted the military aristocracy of the country.

Next came those who had goods to the value of ~~twenty~~ fifty pounds or an income of ten pounds. They formed the heavy

/The Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, VII, p. 292, contain a reference to a loan furnished by the king's goldsmith on the occasion of a campaign.

heavy/

infantry, the backbone of the army. They had to provide themselves with a basnet, or steel cap, with its pefane, or extension, a gorget, breast and back plates, armoured gauntlets, and greaves for defence. For offensive purposes their weapons were sword, spear, and dagger. This class together with the final one, composed as it was mostly of traders, gave a good deal of trouble by neglecting the regulations.

The final class was composed of those who had property of comparatively small value. They were required to possess an iron hat, a reinforced body jacket, and a buckler of leather or wood, together with bow, sheaf, sword, and knife. The axe was accepted as a substitute for the bow, and was probably much more popular. It is specially noticeable that there is practically no mention of the spear with regard to this class, which must have been the most numerous. Apparently the schiltrons must have been composed of the members of the second class and must therefore have been limited in numbers. The spear was specified as eighteen feet, or six ells, in length. In addition there were a large number of "naked men" who were liable for the levy, but who could only come with such weapons as they could get. Generally speaking the final class was only used for national defence and was exempted from service in raids over the border.

The duty of enforcing the regulations was in the hands of the sheriffs and baillies and must have proved an onerous one. Scotland was at this time deficient in the means for manufacturing the better types of weapons and these had accordingly to be imported from the continent. Merchants trading abroad were encouraged to bring back arms with them, and in this respect the alliance with France proved of real value. To ensure that each member of the community was equipped with the proper weapons

Members of this class may, of course, have fought on horseback occasionally.

Sometimes it is fixed at twenty pounds, sometimes not mentioned at all.

weapons, /

assizes of arms or wapinschaws were held at fixed intervals. In peace times there were usually four in the year, but when war threatened they might become as frequent as one each fortnight. As a rough and ready check they were very useful, but there was a good deal of evasion, and it is difficult to see how, without an elaborate system of registration, such could be avoided.

Throughout the statutes frequent provisions can be found relating to the encouragement of archery. The system adopted was to set up in each parish, preferably near the church, a butt at which practice could take place. Regulations were made that on holidays each man must carry out a certain amount of shooting, but even the limited practice enjoined on the peasantry was largely neglected. In an attempt to make the task a sport, as it was in England at that time, football and golf, the alternative methods of recreation, were banned. This proved equally useless and to the end of the chapter the Scots remained sadly deficient in expert bowmen.

In considering the causes of this state of affairs it must be remembered that the crown of Scotland was lacking in executive power at this period. The laws promulgated by the parliament form a body of well-reasoned provision for national defence, but were, unfortunately, ineffectively applied. In many, in fact in the majority of districts, the king's writ did not run, and the real executive power was in the hands of the local earl or baron, who put into force these regulations which suited himself. Archery seems to have appealed very little to the Scots, whose military genius rather lay in the direction of close quarter fighting. In the face of this popular dislike the king could do little. If the barons, especially the great Douglas confederation, had chosen to enforce the laws on the subject, something might have been achieved, but this they did not do.

Section 3. The scheme of defence.

In a period of comparative peace the most warlike area of the Scottish lowlands was naturally the border district. In that region, where every man was a soldier, the borderers had

had/

evolved a system of raiding tactics peculiar to themselves. The display of war was noticeable by its absence, and a campaign became a matter of business with a profit and loss account in cattle and men. Generally speaking the border lords could be relied on to repel the minor enterprises of the English, and the bickering which went on incessantly in the Debateable land was not allowed to affect the ordinary military arrangements. Unfortunately the lack of control exercised over the raiders and the lax ideas of meum and tuum which prevailed in the south eventually brought the inevitable consequences. At a time when definite periods of peace between England and Scotland became possible the harmony of affairs was constantly interrupted and trade injured by the operations of the bands which lived by the sword. Thus the initial benefit of the border system was negated by its subsequent disadvantages.

More serious invasions could not be regarded so lightly as mere border forays and regular provision had to be made towards meeting them. Moreover, as the attack might come either by land or by sea, the system of defence had to be of twofold nature. If a strong attack was made by a considerable English land force, warning was given by means of a system of bale-fires, or beacons, which had been established by law./ When this warning reached the court and the fact of an invasion was definitely established, orders were issued for the levying of the host and its concentration near the threatened part of the Lowlands. This, however, would take time and meanwhile the enemy would be pushing on. The duty of the borderers then was to check the advance as much as possible. In this task they were supported by the border strongholds which the enemy could not leave in his rear with impunity. In 1481 the Parliament of James III ordered that all fortresses in the neighbourhood of the borders should be put in a state of defence with men and artillery, and that the owner should hold the castle either himself or by the medium of a trusty deputy.

deputy./

By the following year there were fifteen holds on the borders in a state of defence. The king himself took responsibility for the victualling of Dunbar and Lochmaben, the buttresses of defence for the eastern and western marches respectively, and special attention was to be directed to Hermitage, which commanded Liddesdale.

By the operation of this chain of castles the hostile action was hindered. Three choices, each with its attendant disadvantages, were left to an invading force. The attackers could pass between two units in the chain and thus dangerously restrict their own line of communication. They could take one of the holds by siege which would consume valuable time. Finally they could mask one or more of the castles, and thereby seriously weaken their own force by the detachment which would be necessary.

This reliance upon a line of fortresses for defence is important as it marks a departure from the old system of devastation and retreat. The reasons for the change are fairly obvious. In the passing of time the Lowlands had become too settled and prosperous to be abandoned lightly. The military force of Scotland had increased and the probability is that by the time the castles had been passed an army could be concentrated much larger in numbers than the invading force. Finally, the fact that the strong holds were of stone and were furnished with guns made a prolonged resistance much more probable. This change in strategy was inevitable owing to social development, and it was a wise one. The chances of a definite attempt at conquest by the English were very small, and the fate of Scotland no longer depended upon the fortunes of a single field army which was temporarily irreplaceable./

An attack by sea was more difficult to guard against, but an element of compensation existed in the fact that such an inroad could be only temporary and local. It might indeed cause a

/I make this statement deliberately. The whole resources of the country were now available for defence against what could only be the attack of a part. The rapid recovery of the Scots after Flodden and Pinkie is a proof of the change of circumstances.

a/

good deal of damage, but the landing party could not move very far from its floating base and could not remain in the district indefinitely. In 1482, when an invasion was threatened by Edward IV, active measures were taken to ^a safeguard the coast as far as possible. The menaced coastline was divided into sections, each six miles in length and a mile in depth. Every section had a local captain appointed and provision was made to call out the local levies immediately a hostile fleet appeared. The system was not tested by attack and cannot therefore be criticised, but it was probably as good a one as could be devised at the time.

The military system of the Jameses was not a perfect one and, even such as it was, could not be put into full operation by the crippled executive. Nevertheless it was as good a scheme as the times would allow, as good as that of most continental countries of the period, and far in advance of any development that might reasonably be expected from the chaotic and disunited state of the country during the major portion of the fourteenth century. At any rate it was a system, not a concomitance of brave men and fortuitous circumstance to make the best of a bad job, as had been the case in the War of Independence.

/Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, ii, p. 139.

Chapter III.

James IV and Sea-Power.

Section 1. Influence of sea-power on Scottish military affairs.

Not until the reign of James IV can the Scots be said to have possessed a fleet capable of attempting the defence of the coast. On the other hand English attempts to secure the command of the sea date back to the ninth century and attained notable success on numerous occasions. Thus there is the double influence to be considered, the lack of sea-power by the Scots and the possession of it by their enemies.

The first seafaring opponents with whom the Scots came into conflict were the Norsemen. The fact that their attack could not be met on the water led to innumerable raids and a few settlements on the mainland and to the loss for a considerable period of the northern and western isles. This foreign occupation was the cause of a good deal of lawlessness in the western highlands and, to some extent, in Galloway, as it distracted the attention of the Scottish kings at a time of attempted organisation. Moreover the islands provided a refuge for fugitive rebels and outlaws from the mainland. Fortunately for the Scots the Norsemen were too far from their base of operations to maintain their possession, but it will be recalled how Alexander III was unable to concentrate his force to meet Haco's attack and how he was compelled to rely upon the climate and the exhaustion of his enemies for his success.

It is doubtful if the lack of a fleet exercised any great influence on the conduct of the offensive campaigns of the Scots in the north of England. The main duty of ships in such expeditions would have been one of supply, a duty fully performed by the Scottish foragers. There is no indication that any raiding army in the northern counties ever suffered seriously from a shortage of food. Such a shortage could, indeed hardly exist in a comparatively wealthy agricultural district for individuals so easily satisfied with rough ^{re} ~~fair~~ as were the Scots of the period.

period./

It is true that the necessity of foraging occasionally led to the undue dispersion of the invading army. This danger might have been obviated by the presence of a supply fleet, but such an advantage would have been more than counterbalanced by the fact that the army would have been restricted to a narrow line of operations in immediate contiguity to the coast owing to the necessity of keeping in touch with its ships. Swift-sailing vessels might have carried raiding parties to points far south on the English coast, but such pin-pricking could have accomplished nothing of value.

It was in defence that the Scots suffered most severely from the maritime supremacy of their English enemy. Most of the serious invasions of the north were carried out with the support of a fleet of transports as the best means of overcoming the devastation policy generally adopted by the Scots. An attacking force could not subsist for many days in Scotland without supplies landed on the seaboard. Lack of these supplies would have stifled many of the English movements at their birth and would have curtailed the activities of most of the others. When a detailed examination is made the result is astonishing. The battle of Dunbar need not have been fought and Edward I could not have overthrown Baliol so easily. The Falkirk campaign could not have been carried out at all. The campaign of Bannockburn would have come to an even more premature conclusion. Edward Baliol's landing in Fife would have been impossible. Berwick could have been supplied with food and reinforcements from the sea and the battle of Halidon Hill could thus have been avoided. Minor considerations, which only add more weight to the overwhelming influence exerted by sea-power, are that Scottish communication with France would have been rendered safer, that trade with the continent would have been facilitated, and that the English could not have held isolated fortresses on the Scottish coast by revictualling the garrisons by sea. As Scotland was in the Middle Ages a self-supporting country

/ Though in this case the English seem to have relied more on land transport, and thereby crippled their advance.

country/

in food supplies, the question of a blockade does not arise.

The fact that the Scots did not at any early period attempt to meet the menace of the English at sea, need occasion no surprise. Supplies of homegrown timber of a suitable variety and size were very limited, and the day of organised imports had not yet arrived. The equipped yards and the expert workmen necessary for the turning-out of a sufficiently large number of vessels did not exist, although isolated cases of shipbuilding on a modest scale can be found. The national instinct of the people did not lie towards seafaring. In any case it is very doubtful if a Scottish fleet could have put up a successful fight at this period against an English one of equal or superior size. Before the general adoption of artillery maritime battles consisted largely of missile combats at close quarters together with a limited amount of ramming and a considerable amount of boarding. In boarding the Scots would assuredly have held their own, and might even have done so in the management of the great mangonels or catapults often employed; but it is only too evident that in the missile combats the superiority of the English archers would have told its usual tale and that the decks of the Scottish vessels would have been swept with arrows, as were those of the French at Sluys in 1340.

Section 2. The war-vessel of the period.

In the strict sense of the word there were practically no ships of war in Northern European waters in the later Middle Ages. In the Mediterranean the war galley was in common use, but the sailing vessel, intended solely for the carrying out of hostilities, had not yet been generally adopted. The explanation of this fact is that there was no constant demand for a war fleet and that few communities could face the cost of maintaining a large number of vessels purely for naval purposes.

On the other hand practically every sailing vessel was

The Scot did not become a sailor till the invention and adoption of the marine engine.

was/

capable of being adapted to warlike pursuits on very short notice. Throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries piracy of a peculiar kind was frequently practised and every merchant ship had to take precautions to meet a possible attack. These preparations were also made with the view of making an attack if a suitable opportunity appeared, and in this lay the peculiarity of the piratical practices of the time. Although countries might be at peace with each other on land, it was generally recognised that no such state of affairs existed at sea. Thus a perpetual warfare was waged on certain traffic routes, and most merchant captains and crews started on a voyage with the intention of adding the spice of a little profitable piracy to their prosaic and legitimate function of trading, always provided that they could fall in with a foreign vessel of inferior strength. Too often the crew of a captured ship and the ship itself fell victims to the desire of their captors to cover up their tracks and leave no traces of their plundering. In certain regions this provocative form of fighting was particularly fierce. The rivalry of the Norman seamen with those of the Cinque Ports was of long standing and had to no small degree contributed to the causes of the Hundred Years' War.

The prevalence of maritime warfare necessarily made every country engaged in overseas trade to any appreciable extent the possessor of a number of potential ships of war. The general adoption of artillery aided this development by making the arming of vessels practically universal. In early days every sailor was capable of playing his part in a hand-to-hand fight, but only the larger ships could afford an equipment of mangonels and a guard of expert archers. The introduction of guns made the arming of a vessel of moderate size a comparatively inexpensive process, as the necessary complement of gunners could usually be provided by the crew itself after a little practice.

/This attitude may be compared with the "No peace beyond the line" theory of the Elizabethan sailors.

The more settled state of Scotland and the existence of the alliance with France had led to an increase in the overseas trade of the northern country and the consequent possession of a number of merchant-cum-war vessels. Thus it was that the most famous ships of the reign of James IV, the "Yellow Carvel" and the "Flower", were merely converted merchantmen, and that the leading admirals of the time, Sir Andrew Wood and the Bartons, were primarily trading captains. The only real man-of-war possessed by the Scots was the "Great Michael", whose building proved rather a costly experiment. Nevertheless the part played by James IV in the sudden advance of the Scottish marine was not limited to the construction of this single vessel. By his judicious reliance on Wood and other captains and his constant encouragement of trade development he was primarily responsible for the whole movement.

The sailing ship of those days stood fairly high out of the water and was broad in relation to its length, being bluff-bowed and square-sterned. The waist was low, but fore and aft were two large erections known as the forecastle and sterncastle, or poop. It was in these castles that most of the guns were mounted. Those of heavier calibre were used for breaching the hull of the hostile vessel, while the lighter guns, or falconets, swept the decks. Grapnels for holding ships together to facilitate boarding were provided, and in some cases boarding netting was fixed to the bulwarks and lower rigging. Some distance up the masts were fighting tops, small enclosures planned to hold a few men who from their position of vantage might hurl down missiles upon the enemy's decks. Ports were not generally cut for the guns in the body of the ship, but rather in the castles.

The "Great Michael" was far in excess of the ordinary size and had an extra castle amidships in addition to the usual two at bow and stern. It was fitted with a complete tier of guns on the lower deck so that broadside firing was possible. The number of guns carried seems enormous by modern standards, but it should be remembered that most of them were of small calibre. As the strength of such a vessel lay in its artillery, provision was

was/

rather made for preventing boarding than for helping it. The equipment of fighting tops and of external galleries was extensive. The impression gained is that such a ship was a unit of considerable fighting value, but that it must have been very difficult to manoeuvre with any degree of speed./.

Section 3. Wood and Andrew Barton.

It is greatly to the credit of James IV that he turned from the nobles, who would have made him their catspaw, to the commons in his search for help in the strengthening of the country. It was through this change in policy that Andrew Wood of Largo in Fife came into prominence. In 1488 great damage was done to Scottish ships in the firth of Forth by five English vessels, although the two countries were nominally at peace at the time. To stop this nuisance Wood was sent out to fight the "pirates" with the "Yellow Carvel" and the "Flower". An encounter took place off Dunbar in which, despite the superior numbers of his opponents, Wood was entirely successful. All the hostile vessels were taken and were brought captive with their crews into the port of Leith.

Such a rebuff as this could not be accepted quietly by the English authorities. Henry VII promptly appealed for volunteers and promised large rewards to the captain who might defeat Wood and bring him a prisoner to England. After some hesitation, due perhaps to Wood's formidable reputation, the post was claimed by Stephen Bull. To him were given three large vessels, well armed and manned with picked crews, and with these he sailed north to the firth of Forth in the summer of 1489.

Wood was at this time engaged in^a trading voyage to Flanders with his two vessels, and it was Bull's plan to intercept him on his return. Accordingly the English ships lay close behind the isle of May with the intention of surprising the Scots at a time when the prospect of a speedy arrival in harbour

/Reference is made to the admirable models in the Scottish Museum, Edinburgh.

harbour/

might have rendered them careless. The time of waiting was passed in attacks upon Scottish fishing vessels, several of which were captured. Bull ransomed the captains of these small craft, but kept a certain number of the men prisoners so that he might be informed of the identity of approaching vessels.

Soon after dawn one morning the English lookout saw two vessels coming round St. Abbs Head. On being promised their freedom the captive fishermen identified them as Wood's ships, and the English accordingly sallied out to meet them. Wood had not expected an attack, but he was not the man to be caught off his guard and before the hostile fleet closed the Scots were fully prepared for the encounter. On both sides the decks were cleared and the guns loaded. Crossbowmen were stationed at various points of vantage on the ships. The crews of the fighting-tops were provided with fireballs and limepots to drop on the hostile decks. Finally wine was served out all round to hearten the sailors for the conflict.

The English were superior in numbers and in heavy artillery, but these advantages were counterbalanced by the seamanship of Wood. Realising that a game of "long bowls" would favour his opponents and that he must strive to render their heavy guns useless, he quickly got to the windward of the English ships. Once in this position the Scots were able to come rapidly to close quarters with their enemy and thus to reap their advantage of their own skill in handstrokes. Similarly this manoeuvre allowed the Scots to use their lighter artillery with full effect. The fight continued fiercely under the gaze of hundreds of anxious spectators who thronged the neighbouring shores, but at night the opponents separated. Dawn of the next day found them close together and the combat was renewed as stubbornly as ever and continued for some hours, while a south wind and an ebbing tide carried the contending vessels up the coast of Fife. As they approached Inchcape off the firth of Tay the Scots put forth still greater efforts and at length succeeded in overcoming the ~~xxxx~~ resistance of the English. Bull and his

his/

crews were taken with their ships to Dundee, but were soon afterwards sent home with rich presents by James. The victory was due to the managing ability of Wood and the personal skill of the Scots at close quarter fighting. The long duration of the struggle conveys the impression that at certain stages the fighting cannot have been very deadly, or there would have been no survivors at all. Probably the artillery was comparatively ineffective in damaging the opposing vessels. 2.

In the spring of 1511 Andrew Barton with two ships, the "Lion" and "Jenny Pirwyn", entered the Channel and robbed ships of all nationalities, on the ingenious plea that the Scots were at war with the Portuguese and that the pirated goods were contraband of war. As English vessels were suffering severely, Henry VIII in June sent the Lord Admiral, Sir Edmund Howard, and Lord Thomas Howard with two ships to deal with the raiders. The English vessels were separated by stress of weather and several weeks elapsed before anything could be done. In August Lord Howard fell in with Barton in the Downs and gave chase. The English ship speedily overhauled the "Lion" and a close combat resulted. Howard and his men boarded the Scottish vessel and fought their way to the main deck in the face of a stout resistance. The fall of Barton, mortally wounded by an arrow shot, brought about the surrender of his men. Meanwhile the Lord Admiral had pursued the "Jenny Pirwyn" and taken possession of it by similar methods after an equally stubborn resistance on the part of the Scots against superior numbers. The prisoners and ships were taken to Blackwall, but the captives were almost at

In any case it would have been difficult to hold them prisoners officially during a period of peace.

2Pitscottie, pp. 155-158. The purpose of the fireballs is obvious; possibly the limepots broke on impact and scattered their blinding contents. The use of lime was, of course, an old trick; e.g. Hubert de Burgh in the Channel in the early part of the reign of Henry III.

at/

once pardoned and released by Henry./

As in the case of Wood's victory over Bull it is noticeable that the contest was won by close quarter fighting and that little reliance was placed in the damaging powers of the guns carried. Even so late as the time of the Armada the ship artillery, although it frequently did great damage, was seldom capable of sinking or entirely disabling a hostile vessel. Of fleet actions and schemes of manoeuvre in James IV's time there is no trace. The number of vessels available was not great enough to permit of a regular trial of strength for the prize of seapower. In the sequel Scottish maritime fortunes again sank into obscurity and in the sixteenth century, subsequent to the battle of Flodden, the Scots were unable to resist the sea-raids of the English on Leith and Edinburgh.

/Hall's chronicle, p. 525.

Chapter IV.

Flodden Field. /.

Section 1. The "Ill Road".

In August, 1513, James IV, acting in the interests of the French and against the wishes of many of his nobles, sent his defiance to Henry VIII who was at that time before Terouenne in northern France. A great muster of the Scots was ordered, and while this was proceeding Lord Home, the Lord Chamberlain, entered Northumberland with a strong raiding party. Much damage was done and a good deal of plunder collected, mostly in the shape of cattle. But as the raiders were returning towards the border they were ambushed and completely surprised by Sir Edward Bulmer, the sheriff of Durham, at Millfield, a spot within two miles of Flodden. The Scots made some resistance, but were overwhelmed by the volleys poured in by the English archers and took to flight with heavy loss in slain and prisoners, an inauspicious opening for the campaign. 2.

The muster which took place at the Burgh Moor of Edinburgh about the middle of August must have been greatly facilitated by the improved system of mobilisation referred to in the second chapter of this part. The executive power of James IV was, for Scotland, a strong one and the assembly would be fully representative of the military strength of the country. Such being the case the army was the greatest ever put in the field by the Scots. Nevertheless the estimate of one hundred thousand, generally given by the chroniclers, is a gross exaggeration. To supply such a force for a campaign of two or three weeks was an impossibility. Probably forty thousand is a generous limit for the

The chief authorities on the battle, Hall, the ~~Sax~~ State Papers of Henry VIII, and Thomas Ruthal, are in fairly close agreement as to the details of the struggle.

2. Sir Richard Baker, p. 260; Hall's chronicle, p. 556.

the/

size of the Scottish army at any point in the campaign. It is evident that so large a force could not be supplied by the higher military categories, so that the lower classes must have been extensively drawn upon. This fact accounts for the numerous desertions which took place during the days preceding the battle. In feeding the troops primary attention would be given to the better armed section, and many of the "naked men" would be left to shift for themselves. When allowance has been made for the deserters, sick, casualties, and stragglers, it will be fairly safe to put the number of the Scots engaged in the actual battle at a little over thirty thousand, against about two thirds that number of English. The northern host was accompanied by a battering train of seventeen heavy guns, together with several lighter pieces of ordnance.

On August 22nd James, whose sole object was to create a diversion in favour of the French, crossed the border in the vicinity of Coldstream. Wark castle was destroyed and Norham besieged. The latter fortress was one of the strongest on the borders, having a double line of moat and wall, and should have been able to make a prolonged resistance. The warden, however, made too free a use of his powder and other defensive stores, with the result that after a six days' siege he was left without means of resistance and was compelled to surrender the castle to destruction. The news of this disaster, which took place on the 29th, was a sore blow to Surrey, who was hastening north and who had hoped that Norham would hold back the Scots for some time.²

Surrey had been informed of the siege on the 25th, when near York, and had issued orders for a general levy in the north-

As Wark is, allowing for the windings of the Tweed, ten miles from Norham, it was probably thrown down by a detachment from the main body. It is unlikely that James could cross the Tweed, destroy Wark, and then march ten miles downstream with his whole host so rapidly.

² Hall, pp. 557-559; Baker, p. 260.

northern/

counties, the rendezvous to be at Newcastle on September 1st. On August 26th he himself marched north from York with a few hundred men in dreadful weather and over roads which were buried in mud and water. The concentration of the English forces at Newcastle was duly accomplished without accident and by the beginning of September Surrey had close on twenty thousand men. He was further reinforced by the arrival by sea of the Lord Admiral with one thousand more, probably experienced troops and seamen sent to stiffen the levies.

Meanwhile James had not been idle. The capture of Norham was followed by an advance south and the capture and destruction of Etal and Ford, fortresses of much inferior strength to Norham. Then, as Surrey's advance from Newcastle to Alnwick was reported, the Scottish army formed an entrenched camp in a strong position on Flodden ridge across the Till from Ford castle. James kept his own headquarters in the castle and did not move into the camp till the destruction of the fortress was begun on September 5th. While at Ford he received from Surrey at Alnwick a challenge to fight a pitched battle on plain ground. On the 6th Surrey arrived with his whole force on Wooler Haugh from which he was able to appreciate to the full the strength of the Scottish position. Looking from the English bivouac across the Millfield valley, scouts could ascertain that James's right wing was covered by a marsh, his left by the unfordable Till, and his front by a steep slope swept by the fire of his guns. On the 7th the English general renewed his challenge to fight on the level ground of the Millfield, but James, realising the strength of his ground, and the fact that Surrey's force, through a hurried mobilisation and rapid marches, was inadequately supplied, wisely contented himself with expressing his willingness to fight, but only in his own position.

/The eminences of Flodden and Branxton are not lofty, but their approaches are steep and narrow owing to the presence of small cliffs and scaurs where the ground has broken away.

As a frontal attack on the Scottish position was out of the question, the English leaders crossed the Till on the 8th and marched northwards along the east side of the stream. The ground was broken and wooded, the bad weather continued, the shortage of supplies was greater than ever, but despite these handicaps the English van had reached the neighbourhood of Twizell Bridge by nightfall, while the main body bivouaced at Barmoor Wood, nearly opposite the Scots. James had a general idea of the direction of the hostile march,¹ but for all practical purposes he had lost touch with the enemy, a most serious fault under the circumstances. In the forenoon of the 9th the English vanguard crossed Twizell Bridge without interruption by the Scots, while the rear portion was brought across the Till by Surrey by the bridge near the Millfield.² The Scots could not prevent the crossing at Twizell; it was between four and five miles distant from their camp, an interval which the clumsy artillery would have taken at least two hours to cover. Moreover the bridge was deep in the Till valley and movements round it could not be distinguished from Flodden Edge by the naked eye.³

¹ Hall states that James believed that the English were making for the Lothians in order to ravage that fertile district.

² Hall, p. 560 onwards.

³ I have satisfied myself on this point by a personal trial. Nevertheless I do not take the usual view of Pitscottie's account in this matter. His general description of the campaign is very faulty but it has been misinterpreted in this instance. The general assumption is that the master gunner offered to James to cut Twizell with his guns and so divide the English army. Hume Brown and, apparently, Andrew Lang, seem to have supposed that this was to be a repetition of Stirling Bridge, and Mr. Lang suggests that it was impossible; which it certainly was. But did Pitscottie mean Twizell Bridge? He only mentions the bridge of Till. The crossing at the Millfield was within easy striking distance of the Scots and could have been destroyed before Surrey crossed. The English van, which must have crossed Twizell at an earlier hour, would then have been in a trap. Thus James indeed "should have no displeasure at the one half, while the other should be devoured." This seems a rational explanation of the gunner's suggestion, which James rashly refused. Pitscottie, p. 181.

Section 2. The defeat of the Scots.

The English host was now reunited and advanced towards the foot of Branxton hill in four divisions. The right wing, which was originally the vanguard, was some distance in advance of the others, so that the attack tended to be one in echelon. This wing was composed of two sections, a smaller and a larger. The former under Sir Edmund Howard formed the extreme right or western flank, for the English were now fighting with their backs to Scotland. The larger section constituted the bulk of the right wing and was commanded by the Lord Admiral. In the centre was Surrey himself with the main part of his army, and on the left wing the command was held by Sir Edward Stanley. In rear of the right wing was a reserve of cavalry under Dacre.

As the English advanced James became alarmed lest they should occupy Branxton hill which formed, as it were, a step up to Flodden Edge. Accordingly he abandoned his strong position, fired his camp and its litter, and under cover of the smoke, which rolled thickly between the two hosts, moved rapidly down by Branxton towards the plain. The army was arranged rather in a crescent shape, having the royal division in the centre and two advanced wings of two divisions each. The extreme section on the left was composed of Home's borderers and Huntly's Gordons; next on the left wing came the Strathmore troops of Errol and Crawford. On the right the extreme flank was held by the Highlanders under Lennox and Argyle, and the inner division was that of Bothwell. There was, apparently, no ~~xxx~~ reserve. The unintentional echelon advance of the English led the Scots to direct their attack mainly against the right and centre of the opposition, so that their own right was liable to be taken in reverse by the English left as it came up.

As the armies approached each other a short artillery duel took place in which the Scottish gunners were quickly worsted possibly owing to the fact that from their elevated position they could only employ a plunging fire, which is never very effective except against fortifications. The first clash came on the extreme west where Sir Edmund Howard's little wing was attacked by Home

Home/

and Huntly. The Cheshire men were overwhelmed by the superior numbers of the Scots and Tunstal, Harbottle, and Berkeley were killed, and several prisoners taken. The successful progress of the Scots was checked by a charge of the reserve cavalry under Dacre and by the marked preference shown by Home's men for plundering as opposed to fighting. As Dacre's Tynedale horse also resorted to pillage and even attacked their own camp, fighting on this wing ceased. Almost simultaneously the Lord Admiral and the Percies broke the next division of the Scots and killed Crawford. The main mass of the Scots led by the king and drawing with them Bothwell's division now hurled themselves upon Surrey's centre. At first the rush was successful and the English recoiled; but James was killed by repeated wounds within a short distance of the English general and the victorious division of the Lord Admiral fell on the defenceless flank of the attackers. At the same time Sir Edward Stanley overthrew the Highlanders on the Scottish right wing, slew Lennox and Argyle, and forced his way up and across the slopes of Branxton, which was left defenceless by the absence of any Scottish reserve. The central division of the invaders was now hemmed in in front and on both flanks, pelted with arrows and constantly harassed by the billmen. Nevertheless the spearmen held stubbornly together till darkness ended the conflict. Only the fact that the start of the battle had been delayed till four o'clock in the afternoon enabled them to do so. Surrey's army, with its right wing partly destroyed and its centre badly battered, was in no state to carry on active night operations, and the Scots, who were probably still superior in numbers, were able to withdraw across the fords of the Tweed at Coldstream. Home and his borderers kept the field till the following morning.

The loss of the Scots may have been about eight thousand./All their artillery fell into the hands of the victors and was removed to Etal. In proportion to the number of the

./Ten to twelve thousand is the number usually given by the contemporary authorities.

the/

fallen the loss in men of high rank was enormous, and the Scottish nobility fully redeemed itself on this occasion. The English loss was probably about two thousand and a good number of their stragglers and would-be pursuers were swept up as prisoners by the retreating Scots./

Section 3. James's errors.

It is sufficiently clear that the invasion should never have been undertaken. James had other grievances besides the motive of helping France, but they were comparatively trifling. The Franco-Scottish alliance was one for mutual defence and the Scots had played a much greater part than the French in carrying the plan into operation. There existed no real danger to Scottish independence at the period of James's reign, a danger which could have formed the only rational excuse for an attack on the English border. The Scottish king threw away the strength of his country for the sake of an idea, a very chivalrous action but not practical leadership.²

Once set on foot the expedition might have been more profitably directed against Berwick than against the fortresses on the south side of the Tweed. It is very probable that with his large numbers, his powerful artillery, and the cooperation of his little fleet, James could both have captured the town and held the line of the Tweed against any attempt by Surrey to raise the siege. He would then have had some tangible gain to show for his expenditure of men and money, some pawn for negotiation, instead of an untenable district in a hostile country. The fortifications of Berwick cannot have been much, if any, stronger than those of Norham, and there would have been a Scottish party in the town

/Hall, p. 163 onwards; Ruthal's letter to Wolsey; State Papers of Henry VIII, Scotland, IV, i; Pitscottie, pp. 182-183.

²So long as the spirit of nationalistic patriotism is the ruling sentiment, the idealistic leader must take a back seat and the practical Frederick II type hold the field. Whether this is a desirable state of affairs is another matter.

town/

itself. It is surprising that James, after encouraging the Scottish marine forces, did not employ his new arm on the one occasion on which it would have been really useful, instead of sending it to France.

The uses to which an entrenched camp may be put are two in number. It may be employed as a base from which the striking force may aim blows at the enemy when suitable occasions arise, or it may be utilised as a purely defensive position. The Scottish camp at Flodden Edge could have been used in either of these directions; in James's hands neither course was adopted. Up to the point of Surrey's departure from Wooler the leadership of the Scottish king was sound, although the calls upon his ability had not been great. From that time everything went wrong. In the first place proper touch with the enemy was not maintained, an unpardonable error in an army as full of natural skirmishers and scouts as the Scottish one. As a result of this ^acarelessness the importance of the division of the English host was not realised. This division gave James his great opportunity of defeating the enemy in detail. He could either have held the Lord Admiral's detachment in check by his camp and have fallen upon Surrey with his whole host, or have closed or cut the bridge at Millfield and then used his army to hurl the Admiral into the Till. Retreat across the narrow bridge in face of a furious attack would have been impossible.

When this great chance had been thrown away the Scottish king had still a certainty of success, if not of victory. Well provisioned and supplied he could have worn out Surrey in a waiting game and compelled him to retreat across the Till. If the English had been tempted to attack, the Scots in their strong position and with their superior numbers could easily have repulsed the assault. In practice James systematically adopted the wrong course; he stood still when he should have attacked and attacked when he should have held his ground. Whether this is to be attributed to his overkeen sense of fair play or to his lack of generalship is a debateable point.

In the strategical conflict which preceded the battle the Scottish leader defeated himself. In the tactical conflict he was overcome by the superior leadership of the English commanders. James's methods of fighting an action were too much like those of a bull to be successful. The death of the king himself and the havoc in the ranks of the Scottish nobles show that personal leadership rather than cool direction was the order of the day. In contrast to this rash behaviour stands the intelligent fashion in which the English divisional commanders came to the help of their distressed centre and the ability with which the cavalry reserve covered the shattered right flank at a critical moment. A similar reserve on the Scottish side ready to charge Stanley's men as they climbed the slopes of Branxton might have made all the difference.

Strategically the Flodden campaign does little but emphasise the futility of organised invasions of England as opposed to raids. Tactically it demonstrates several points. The effectiveness of the strong fortress was slowly passing. The English archery was no longer so dreadful a weapon as it had been in the past, for it was not the archers who devastated the Scottish ranks. The Highlander with his small allowance of defensive armour, could not resist the attack of well-protected men-at-arms. Most important of all, the day of the spearman with his overlong and cumbersome weapon had gone. Opposed to the bill which could cut as well as thrust, the eighteen foot spear was of little use in offensive action, and this characteristic weapon of the Scottish mediaeval army was soon to be superseded by the shorter and handier pike.

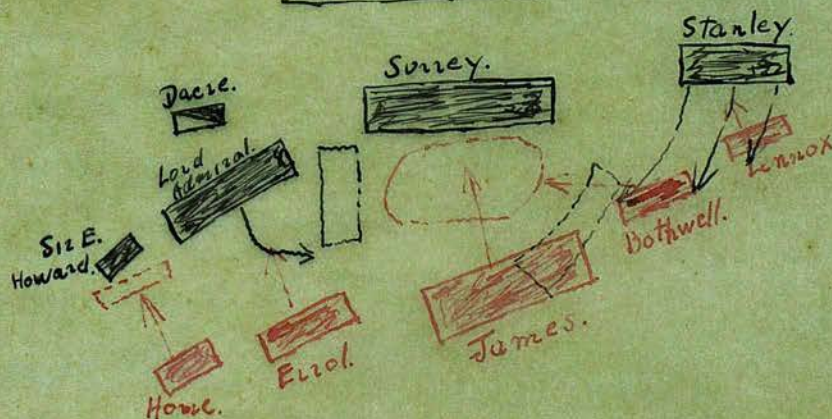
Sketch Map of Flodden District.



Scale approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ " to mile.

- A----- Scottish Camp
B----- Surrey's Challenge Position.
C---C--- " March.
D---D--- March of English Van.
E----- Site of Battle.

The Armies in Presence.



English in Black.
Scots in Red.

Chapter V.

Summary and Conclusion.

Section 1. Scottish strategy, offensive and defensive.

Offensive operations by the Scots in the Middle Ages were confined to the single sphere of the north of England and can be divided into two chronological periods. In the twelfth century the object of the invasions was the conquest and retention of the northern counties; in the thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth, the aim was simply to cause diversions of the strength of England from more vital points at home or abroad.

Permanent conquest necessitated the existence of elaborate siege equipment and a disciplined army of occupation at a time when Scotland possessed neither the one nor the other. In occupying a district which is meant to be held indefinitely, care must be taken to secure possession of the fortresses, the fetters of the country, and to conciliate the inhabitants by respecting their lives and property. The armies of David I and of William the Lion could not do these things. Their attempts at sieges were generally unsuccessful, and the composition of their bands rendered sporadic plundering inevitable. The leaders were not responsible for this state of affairs; the state of civilisation in Scotland was not yet far enough advanced to allow of the formation of a well disciplined host^eor, which was more important, of a properly organised system of supply which would have rendered wasteful foraging unnecessary. It may be, however, that the attacks, failures as they were, served the purpose of a true defensive at a time when the lack of unification in Scotland would have made the country a prey to an organised English conquest.

The mistaken nature of the policy of running risks on behalf of France has already been commented on. The true military sphere of raids of diversion in the north of England was to draw away the southern forces from an attack on a northern fortress or district or to bring pressure to bear on the southern government and thus secure a favourable peace. Thus the attacks made by

by/

Bruce and his lieutenants were truly defined in their scope and resulted in the saving of Berwick and in the extraction of the peace of Northampton from an exhausted enemy. The successful handling of these raids required a high degree of perseverance at a time when things might be going badly elsewhere. When that quality was lacking disaster followed, as in the battles of Dunbar and Halidon Hill. On the other hand, even when Walter was hard pressed in Berwick, Bruce steadfastly refused to risk a battle for the town. Pitched battles, as distinct from combats, had to be avoided in these expeditions. Neville's Cross and Flodden were avoidable disasters brought about by violation of this rule. Otterburn was a successful battle, but it brought to the Scots only a gain in prestige. The most disastrous campaign which the English fought in their own country, that of Weardale, did not contain a single open action.

In this work, where detailed attention can only be directed to the more outstanding actions, the cumulative effect of raids has not been stressed. No account can be taken of the scores of minor parties which crossed the English border at various periods, but the mass result of these operations was very great. This system of warfare gradually created a line of defence which was difficult to pass, but it also brought about in a later stage of the country's development a state of anarchy which was with difficulty corrected by the later rulers.

The traditional form of defensive strategy among the Scots was that of devastation and retreat accompanied by a spirited guerilla warfare against the outposts and detachments of the invaders. This policy was the growth of circumstances; although it was most suitably and concisely expressed by Bruce, it was not the product of any one leader's mind, but the fruit of necessity. Its weak point was the possibility of the invading force being supplied by the sea, but this resource in turn was an uncertain one as such a line of communication could be too easily interrupted by a spell of rough weather. At the best an attacking force could only subsist for a limited number of days in

in/

the devastated belt before a retreat became imperative. In this respect the absence of fixed points of defence was an essential factor in the scheme of resistance. Such points became fixed points of attack, redeeming the invasion from being a mere blow at the air and, when taken, giving positions to the English in which they could post garrisons to hold down the country. The initial success of Edward III was as great as that of Edward I but, owing to the absence of the strong points thrown down in the war of Independence, his period of power was shorter and its tenure less secure than that of his grandfather.

The success of the scheme depended upon two agencies. In the first place the farmers and peasants of the Lothians had to exercise great unselfishness in yielding up their holdings and houses to destruction; even in fact, in most cases, to carry out the destruction with their own hands. There is no case on record of a widespread refusal to lay waste the land when an invasion threatened. The part of the commander was to avoid decisive defeats which would allow the attacking force to disperse its detachments and so to support itself by foraging operations conducted over a large area. The duty of the defending army was to keep in close proximity to the English force and thus, by a constant threat of attack, to compel it to maintain its concentration within its own lines. Such a policy did not absolutely prohibit pitched battles, but allowed them when the situation was strongly in favour of the Scots; examples of this form of action are found in Stirling Bridge and Bannockburn. Dunbar was a defeat which ^{taught} the Scots the lesson of strategy; Falkirk was an honest error of judgement; Dupplin Moor was the unfortunate result of overconfidence; for Halidon Hill there is no excuse; it must remain on record as the crowning blunder of Scottish generalship.

The loss sustained by the Scots through this system of defence was, of course, enormous. It did not lie so much in the destruction of the houses, which were flimsy structures and easily rebuilt, or in the devastation of the farms, which were

were/

poorly cultivated, as in the retarding of civilisation in the most fertile district of Scotland. When the war of Independence was finally over and a spell of quiet was secured by the diversion of English attention to France, the districts of the Carse and of Lothian became more prosperous and thickly peopled. This development, which was the result of the success of the old defensive policy, led inevitably to a change of methods and to the abandonment of that policy. The wealthy areas could no longer be abandoned to ravage unless the situation was desperate. The increasing population and the greater power of the executive led to the creation of more than one line of defence. The field army was once more destined to fight a decisive action on the borders. Greatest change of all, the policy of dispensing with fortresses as fixed positions of defence was reversed, and the border castles took their places as important factors in the new scheme.

Section 2. Battle Tactics.

The battle record of the Scottish army in the Middle Ages is not an imposing one from the point of victories gained. Yet there is little doubt that man for man on fair ground and under equal conditions they were a match for their southern opponents. This is no mean compliment when it is remembered that the English infantry with their robust physical development, their martial training and instincts, and their high morale, were considered at the time of the Hundred Years War the most formidable troops in western Europe.

The secret of the comparative failure of the Scots lies in the lack of certain essential divisions in their army. The mediaeval host had three arms, the infantry, the archers, and the cavalry. The Scots constantly lacked archers and usually, owing to the curious attitude of a large section of the barons, cavalry. The lack of horsemen was partly supplied at a later date

. In the modern army the same division exists; artillery has taken the place of the archery force, and aeroplanes have partly usurped the functions of the cavalry.

date/

by the appearance of the hobelers, but the absence of a missile force remained a fatal handicap till the general adoption of artillery. It followed that the Scots had to endeavour to make one arm do the work of three. In this respect they shared the disadvantage of the French who, with their lack of archers and of reliable infantry apart from the miserable levies of the peasants were reduced to contend with cavalry alone or to supply the gaps by mercenaries or dismounted men-at-arms.

So great a deficiency in the appropriate divisions of the army could only be remedied by the artificial aids of defensive armour or of strong positions. To equip any host, let alone one raised from a peasant population, with armour which would combine the advantages of complete protection from archery attacks and of adequate mobility was frankly impossible. The sole remaining solution lay in the choice of position, and in Scotland the ^{problem} was solved as early as the battle of Stirling Bridge. The necessary position was one which possessed secure protection on the flanks and a natural obstacle, such as a river or a bog, in front. This compelled the attacking force to advance in detail and prevented all arms coming into operation simultaneously; in fact it restricted the English to the employment of one arm and thus put them on an equality with the defending force. When a quick offensive movement was undertaken as a supplement to the strong position the English archers, who could not cross first and unsupported, were left out of the action. If the enemy could be drawn into a barren stretch of country where maintenance was impossible and a retreat was the only alternative to an attack, the advantages of such a position were all the greater. In their constituent elements there is little difference among the lines occupied by the Scots at Stirling Bridge, at Bannockburn, and at Stanhope Park.

The necessity of possessing an infantry force, which could act quickly and effectively against a body of cavalry before the latter could be supported by archers, led to the growth of the schiltrons. A looser formation would have left vulnerable

vulnerable/

gaps through which the horsemen could have penetrated the mass. In practice and confined to its own particular sphere this body was the most successful development of Scottish warfare aided, as it was at the time of the war of Independence, by the fact that the English did not possess any great infantry force for fighting at close quarters apart from the Irish and Welsh, who were not very trustworthy troops. It was only when misguided attempts were made to adapt the schiltron to another form of operation that that formation gradually fell into disuse. Yet even in the last blaze of Scottish mediaeval warfare at Flodden it was only by reverting to the old formation that the centre of the northern host held its ground till dark against combined attacks.

The disadvantage of the schiltron was that it could only be composed of experienced men. With untrained troops its rapid advance could only lead to loss of position and confusion. In the early part of the fourteenth century the Scottish troops had the best of all training, practice in the face of the enemy. When the more peaceful period came the careful provision made for the arming of the country does not seem to have been supplemented by any regulations for drill or manoeuvre. By this time also the practice of fighting offensive battles against a superior enemy had returned and this led to attempted advances in close formation over long intervals of difficult ground which the best troops could not have carried out. The English had the additional advantage of having supplied their deficiency in footmen by the expedient of dismounting a large portion of their men-at-arms. Thus the movements of the Scots under a devastating missile fire against the close ranks of an enemy, which would constitute a formidable obstacle under any circumstances, were foredoomed to failure. There was no place for the offensive battle in Scottish tactics./

Section 3. Generalship.

If an exception is made of the battle of the Standard,

/It is not too much to say that at Halidon Hill the Scottish footmen had about as little chance as the Dervishes at Omdurman.

Standard, /

the earliest encounter under review in this volume, no case can be found of an engagement being lost through the misconduct of the Scottish infantry. Whatever the directions which they had to follow, they obeyed them to the best of their ability. It was only when they were given impossible tasks to carry out that they failed in their execution. The tremendous losses sustained by the footmen in many of the unsuccessful battles constitute a testimonial to their enduring efforts to pull victory out of the fire. It follows that, after due allowance has been made for the disadvantages under which the northern armies always laboured, the responsibility for most of the defeats must be laid at the door of the leaders of the host.

In the Middle Ages military power was mostly in the hands of the barons who constituted, as it were, the military aristocracy. This was an inevitable sequel to the feudal system of landholding, which made the tenants-in-chief the king's lieutenants in the national levy. While all men of rank were soldiers, there were practically no professional leaders of armies. From his ~~adventurous~~ very nature the soldier of fortune was an adventurer or handless man. As an adviser or as the leader of a contingent of mercenaries he was welcome, but it was very rarely that he rose to the command of an army. In most cases the barons would not have tolerated such promotion over their heads, though there is little doubt that such men as Walter Manny had as much military intelligence as most of the barons put together. Occasionally a country, especially England, produced a king who could bring to his natural position of leadership great military intelligence. Generally, however, the multiplicity of the king's duties prevented his becoming proficient as a general and he was dependent upon the advice of a council of barons with no more ability in the matter than himself; this was almost constantly true in the case of France.

As a general rule the barons made good fighters, but most indifferent leaders. When the list of English successes gained at the expense of the Scots is examined, it is found that

that/

at Dunbar, Falkirk, and Halidon Hill the king led the army and that in the latter two cases he directed its movements in person. At the Standard and at Neville's Cross the northern barons of England did not show any outstanding skill; rather it was the Scottish leaders who showed ineptitude. At Flodden Surrey did not show himself in any way a distinguished master of war. Edward II was the only English king defeated in plain battle by the Scots, and it is out the question to say that he controlled the English army at Bannockburn. In brief the tide of English success rose highest during the reigns of her two general-kings, Edward I and Edward III, and that of Scottish victory during the period of Bruce. The Scottish barons had the melancholy privilege of possessing a long list of such incompetent generals as Archibald Douglas and Donald, earl of Mar. It cannot be plausibly alleged that the failure of the baronial leaders was due to the fact that the successful principles of Scottish war had not been adequately demonstrated. They appeared clearly under Wallace in a defensive sense and developed under Bruce in an offensive direction. Yet after the peace of Northampton there appeared a most unfortunate neglect of the lessons learned at so great a cost, and repeatedly the most elementary rules of Scottish warfare were violated in glaring fashion. It is not easy to find an explanation of this negligent behaviour. English leaders did apply the teaching of Dupplin Moor to some practical purpose, and even the French ~~re~~ tried to avoid in later actions the primary error of the Crecy catastrophe. But the Scottish barons, in a fashion almost systematic, forgot the old tricks and failed to produce any new

/His abilities seem to me to have been greatly overrated; the "cunning" which is generally attributed to him does not come into evidence in the risky operations and manoeuvres of the 1513 campaign.

2 Wallace is, of course, an exception to the list of royal leaders; but neither was he a baron. The man was, in fact, a genius and there are no rules for such.

new/

ones. Even in an inbred aristocracy depending on brawn rather than on brains, something better than this was to be expected. Perhaps it was due to the fact that most of the barons were absent from Scotland at the period of the war of Independence. The more probable explanation is, however, that no pains were taken to pass on the fruits of acquired experience from one generation to another. Scotland in the Middle Ages could not foster a Staff College, but it might have possessed a few elementary rules and regulations in written form. Yet the fact remains that, apart from Bruce's testament, there exists nothing approaching a text book on the principles of Scottish warfare.

The redeeming feature is the prolific crop of partisan leaders which Scotland invariably produced from the ranks of the knights and of the common people in times of danger. This is a tribute to the undoubted military ability of the commons, which has appeared even more markedly in modern times. It was also the primary explanation of the fact that Scotland was able to maintain her independence, a performance which, despite the defeats suffered in the process will remain on record as a wonderful effort in the face of natural disadvantages, misdirected leadership, and an exceptionally formidable enemy. Our summing up must be in favour of the people and adverse to their leaders as a whole.

Works of Reference.

Primary.

Chronicles of----Richard of Hexham.

John of Hexham.

Roger of Hoveden.

Aelred of Rievaulx.

Henry of Huntingdon.

Jordan Fantosme.

William of Newburgh.

Wyntoun.

Holy Cross.

Mailros.

John of Fordun.

Lanercost.

Meaux.

Hemingford.

Henry Knighton.

Baker of Swinbrook.

Bridlington.

Froissart.

Hemingburgh.

Walsingham.

Pitscottie.

Hall.

The Haco Saga.

Scalacronica.

Walter of Coventry's Caerlaverock.

Barbour's Brus.

Vita Edwardi Secundi.

Foedera Writs.

Acts of the Scottish Parliament.

Register of the Great Seal of Scotland.

Lord High Treasurer's Accounts.

Exchequer Rolls of Scotland.

State Papers of Henry VIII.

Intermediate.

Lord Hailes.

John Major.

Sir Richard Baker.

Rymer's Foedera

Secondary.

Bain's Documents.

Stevenson's do.

Ashdown's Arms and Armour.

Barron's War of Independence.

Oman's Art of War.

Mackenzie's Bannockburn.

Kermack's Historical Geography.

Dunbar's Scottish Kings (chronology).

Various articles in the Historical Reviews (especially those by
Morris and Millar).

Technical.

Clausewitz. Jomini. Haking.

Numerous Official Commentaries on modern campaigns;